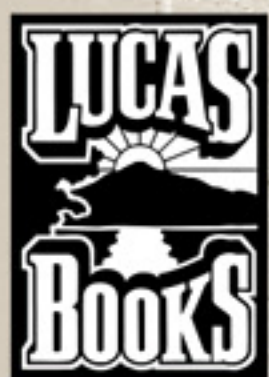


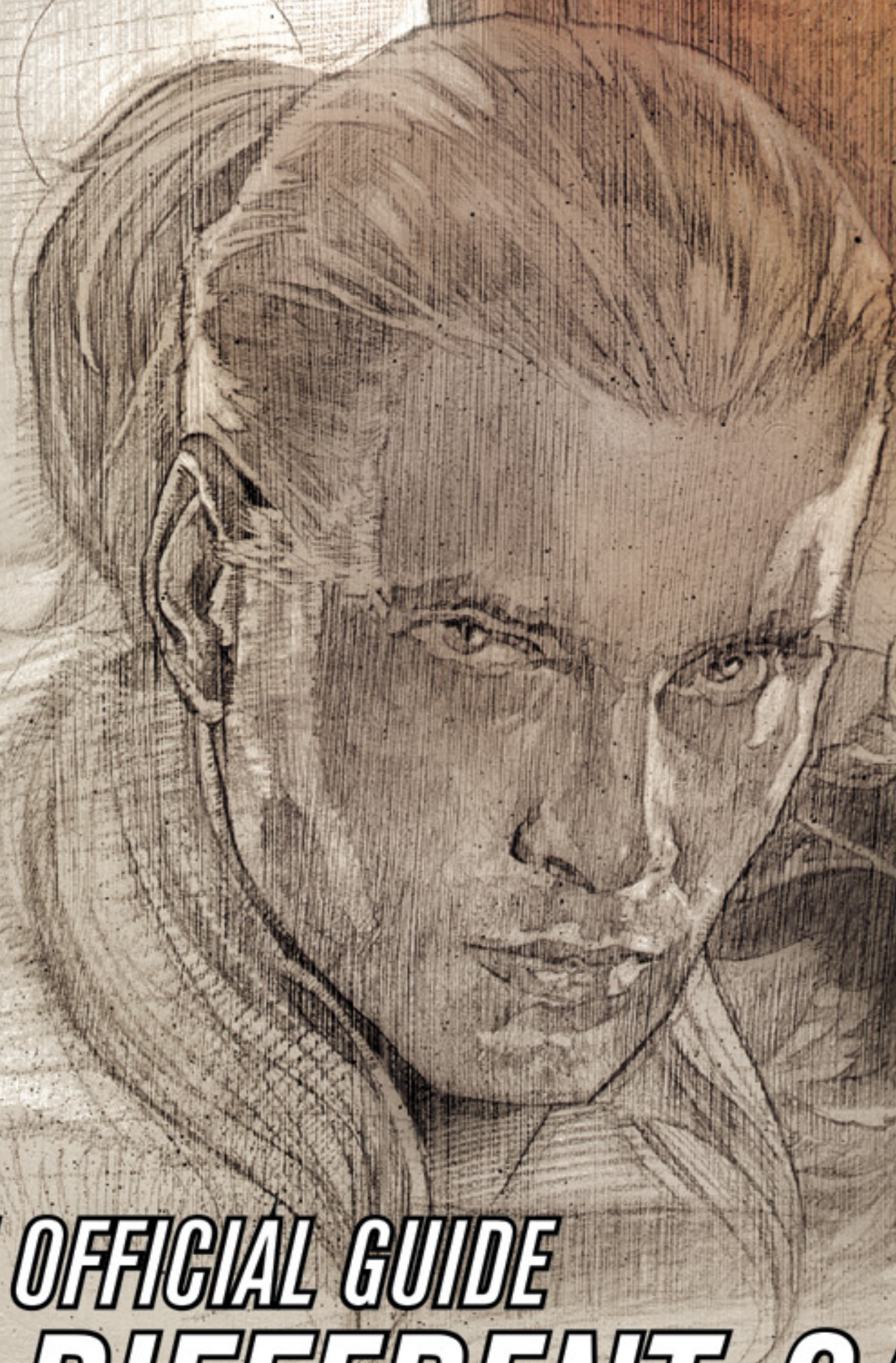
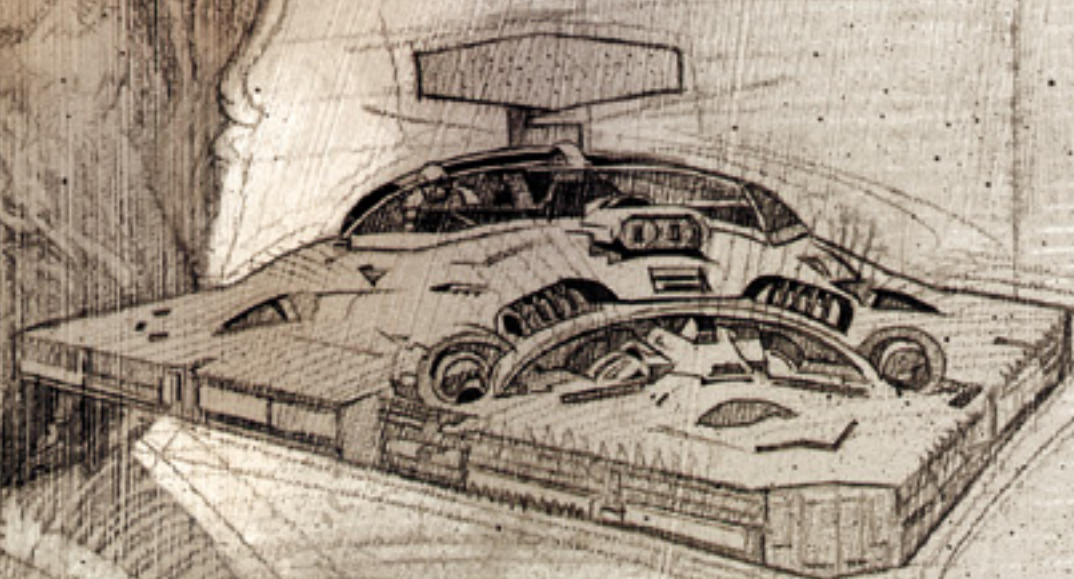


#0 |



BASED ON THE ORIGINAL ROUGH-DRAFT SCREENPLAY BY GEORGE LUCAS

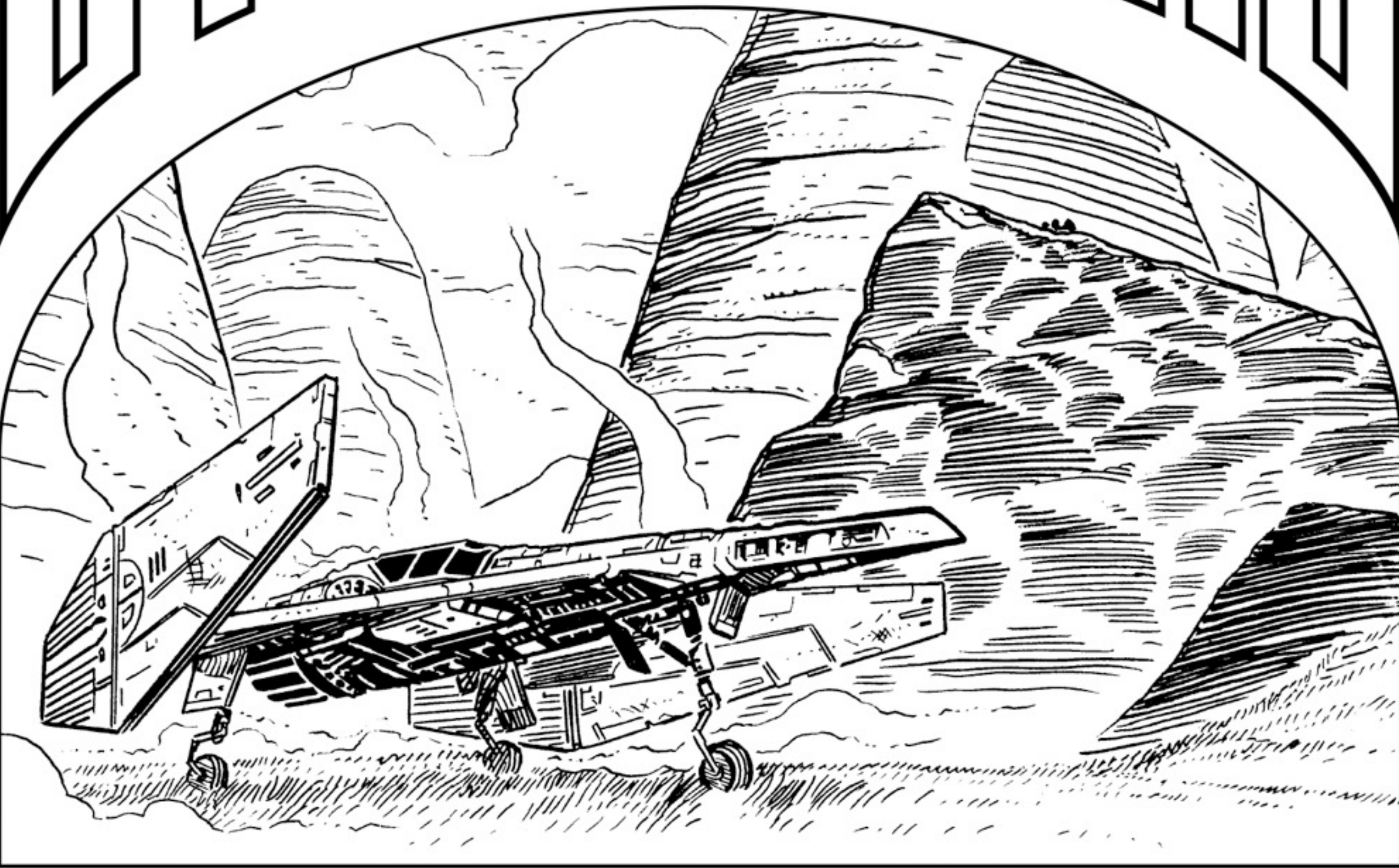
THE STAR WARS™



THE OFFICIAL GUIDE
TO A **DIFFERENT GALAXY!**

ADAPTED FROM THE ORIGINAL ROUGH-DRAFT SCREENPLAY BY GEORGE LUCAS

THE
STAR WARS™



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MIKE MAYHEW SCOTT KOLINS SEAN COOKE KILIAN PLUNKETT
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RAIN BEREDO DAN JACKSON NICK RUNGE

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LELAND CHEE, TROY ALDERS, CAROL ROEDER, JANN MOORHEAD,
AND DAVID ANDERMAN AT LUCAS LICENSING.**

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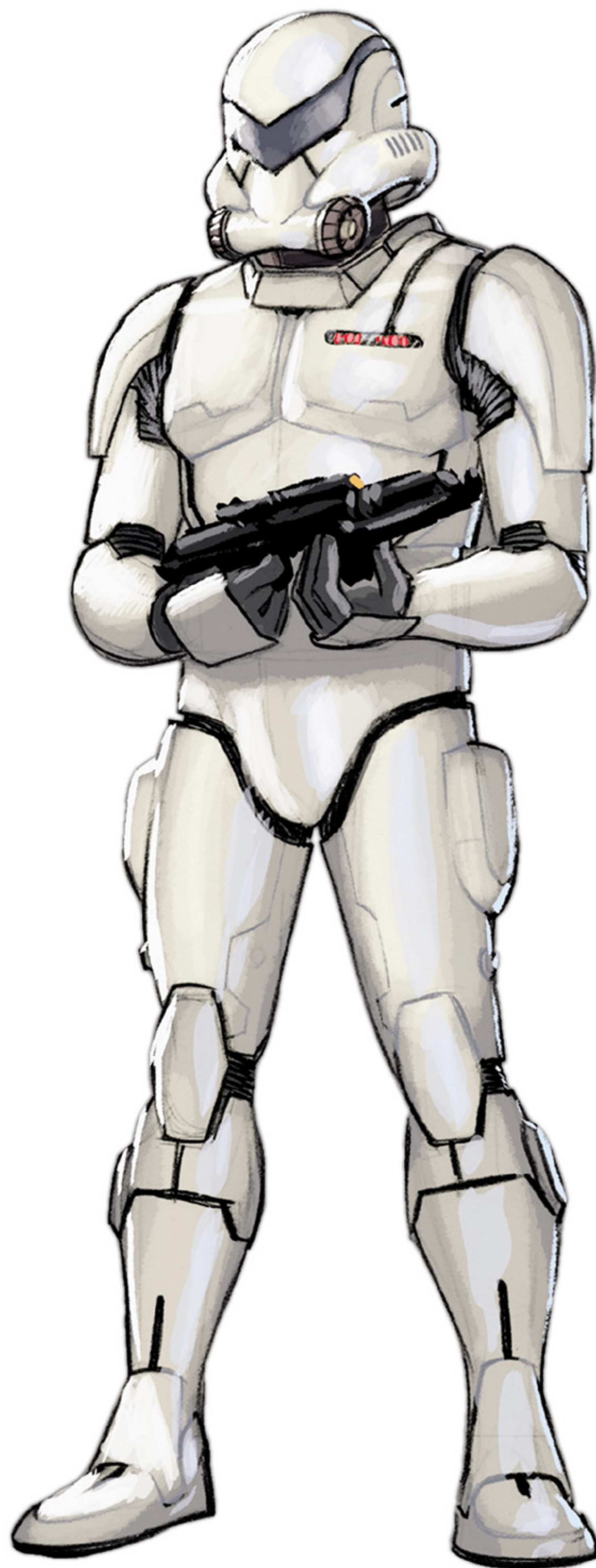
A DIFFERENT GALAXY

How does one go about redefining—and *redesigning*—something so ingrained in our shared consciousness as *Star Wars*? Stick too close to what has been established in the films and your efforts may be perceived as derivative or bland. Stray too far from established designs and you risk losing the flavor altogether. So how do you make the exotic *more* exotic?

First, you go back to the basics—you pull from the initial, unused designs from the original designers who worked on *The Star Wars*. Delving into Lucasfilm's vast archives, we were able to find many hints as to what George Lucas had envisioned before subsequent versions of the script required newer or different designs to be produced. But events were moving quickly during the roll up to production of that first film, and there are many, many characters, vehicles, and locations in *The Star Wars* that were never designed back in the mid-Seventies.

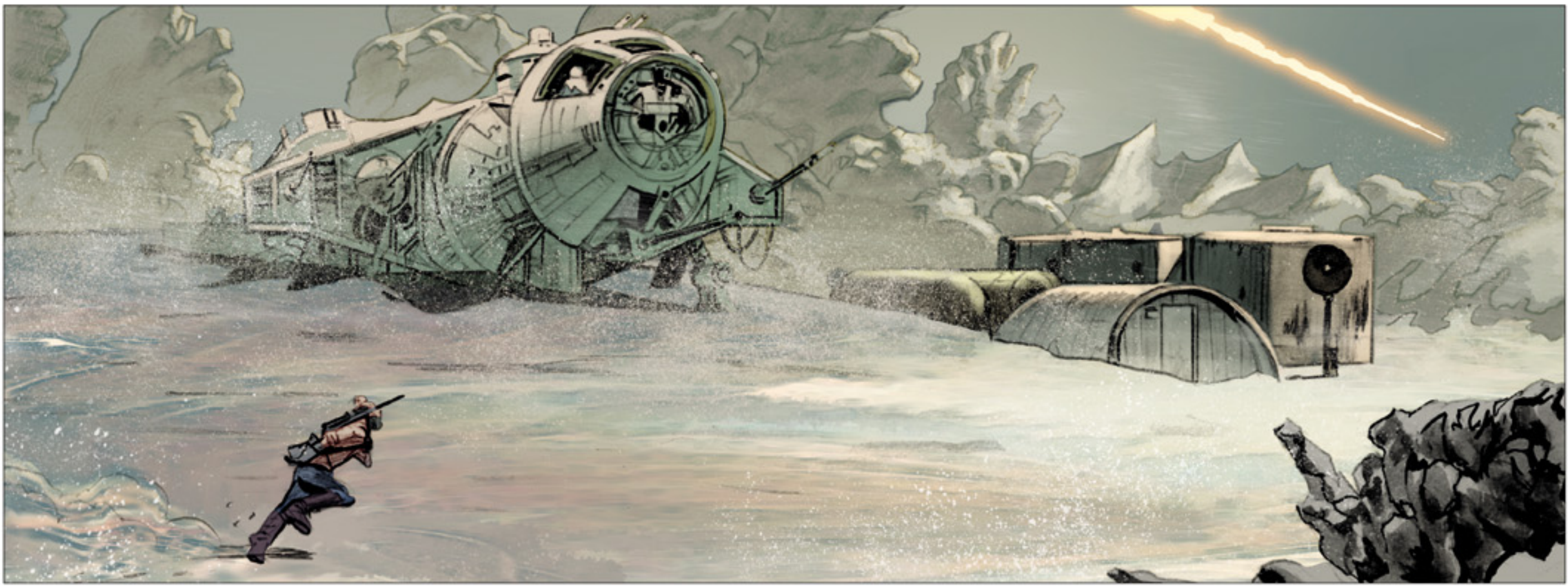
So, the next step is to assemble your own group of talented designers—all of them steeped in the milieu of *Star Wars*—and assign them different aspects of this alternative galaxy.

That's what we did. Assembled here is a small sampling of the literally hundreds of designs produced for the series. But even with an entire team of designers at our disposal, the majority of the work fell to interior artist Mike Mayhew. Out of necessity to meet our schedule, Mike had to begin drawing the first issue before any of the other designers had put pencil to paper, and along the way we discovered dozens of devices and locations that had never been depicted. All told, realizing this series was a massive effort, but then, Mike and the team were only designing an entire galaxy . . .



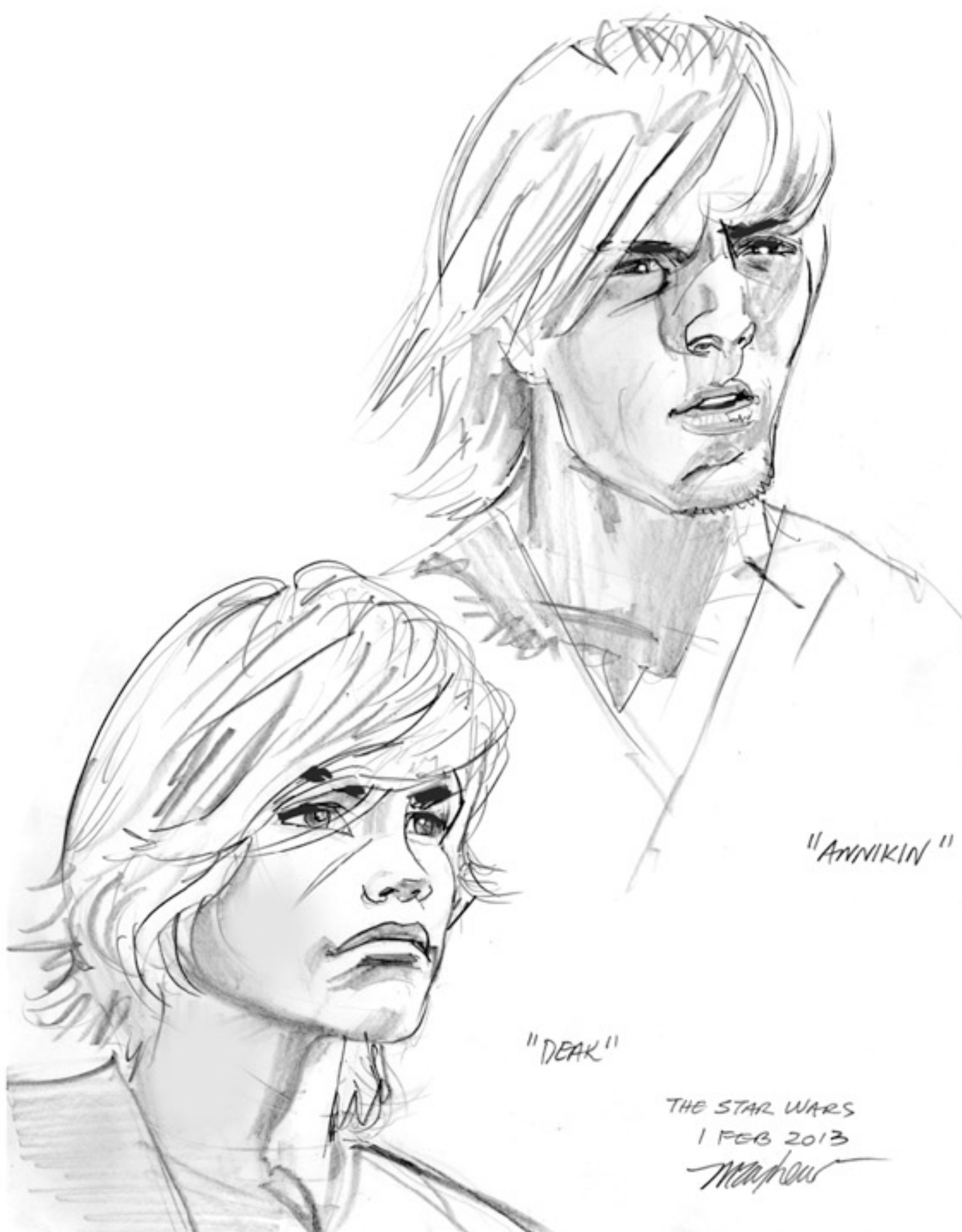
THE STARKILLERS

When we first encounter the Starkiller family—father Kane and his two sons Annikin and Deak (we are never told what happened to the boys’ mother)—they’re living in a makeshift dwelling in the shadow of their broken-down spacecraft on the desolate surface of the fourth moon of Utapau. Kane is a rough-edged individual and a fierce warrior. It is only later that we learn he is a Jedi—a far cry from the restrained, monk-like heroes of the films.





Kane's design, which hides his cyborg nature, harks back to the *Flash Gordon*-inspired early *Star Wars* designs by Ralph McQuarrie.



Naturally, it was desirable that Annikin Starkiller evoke young Mark Hamill's impetuosity from *Star Wars: Episode IV A New Hope*, since the Annikin character fills more or less the same role in this earlier draft. But because Annikin is also supposed to be a veteran of several battles, much of his youthful innocence was transferred to his ill-fated little brother, Deak.



With his classic hero features and his adventurer's garb, it was vital that Anakin still project a degree of uncertainty—especially early in the story, when he first arrives on Aquilae—where his manners left something to be desired.



The final design for Princess Leia was influenced by the films, but a number of different looks were suggested.



LUKE SKYWALKER

Jedi. General. Legend. Luke Skywalker is the military leader of the last free planetary system in the galaxy. As much a mystery to his enemies as he is respected by those in his command, Skywalker is an ageless warrior—and possibly the last of his time.



When General Skywalker first appears in the story, the rough-draft screenplay says:

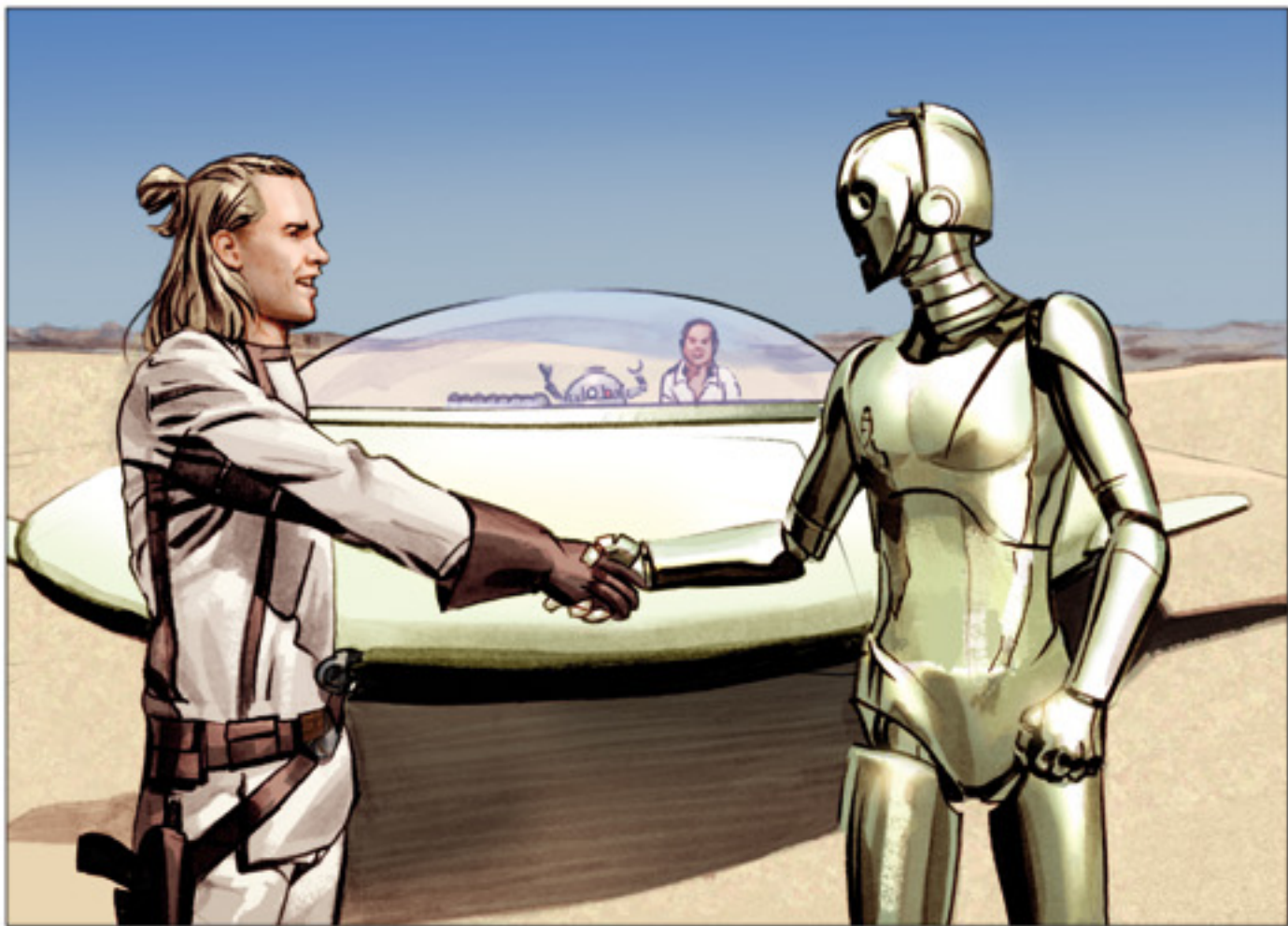
He is a large man, apparently in his early sixties, but actually much older. Everyone senses the aura of power that radiates from this great warrior. Here is a leader: a JEDI general.

Like his longtime friend Kane Starkiller, Luke Skywalker was initially designed in the style of Flash Gordon, but he was finally given a cream-colored uniform with a definite military cut.



ALLIES

Within the Palace of Lite—and far below it in the Hidden Fortress—Luke Skywalker has other allies, including King Kayos and Queen Breha, who depend on the general for military advice concerning the protection of their world and their daughter, Princess Leia.



Later, two iconic droids (who originally belonged to the Empire) become an essential part of Skywalker's retinue.



One of General Skywalker's most trusted operatives is Clieg Whitsun. He risks his life spying on the Empire on Alderaan, and later aids in Princess Leia's escape when Aquilae is invaded.



While in the Imperial capital, Whitsun made contact in a posh nightclub with . . .

...a rough-looking man, BAIL ANTILLES, dressed in the distinctive gold and furs of the Galactic Traders.



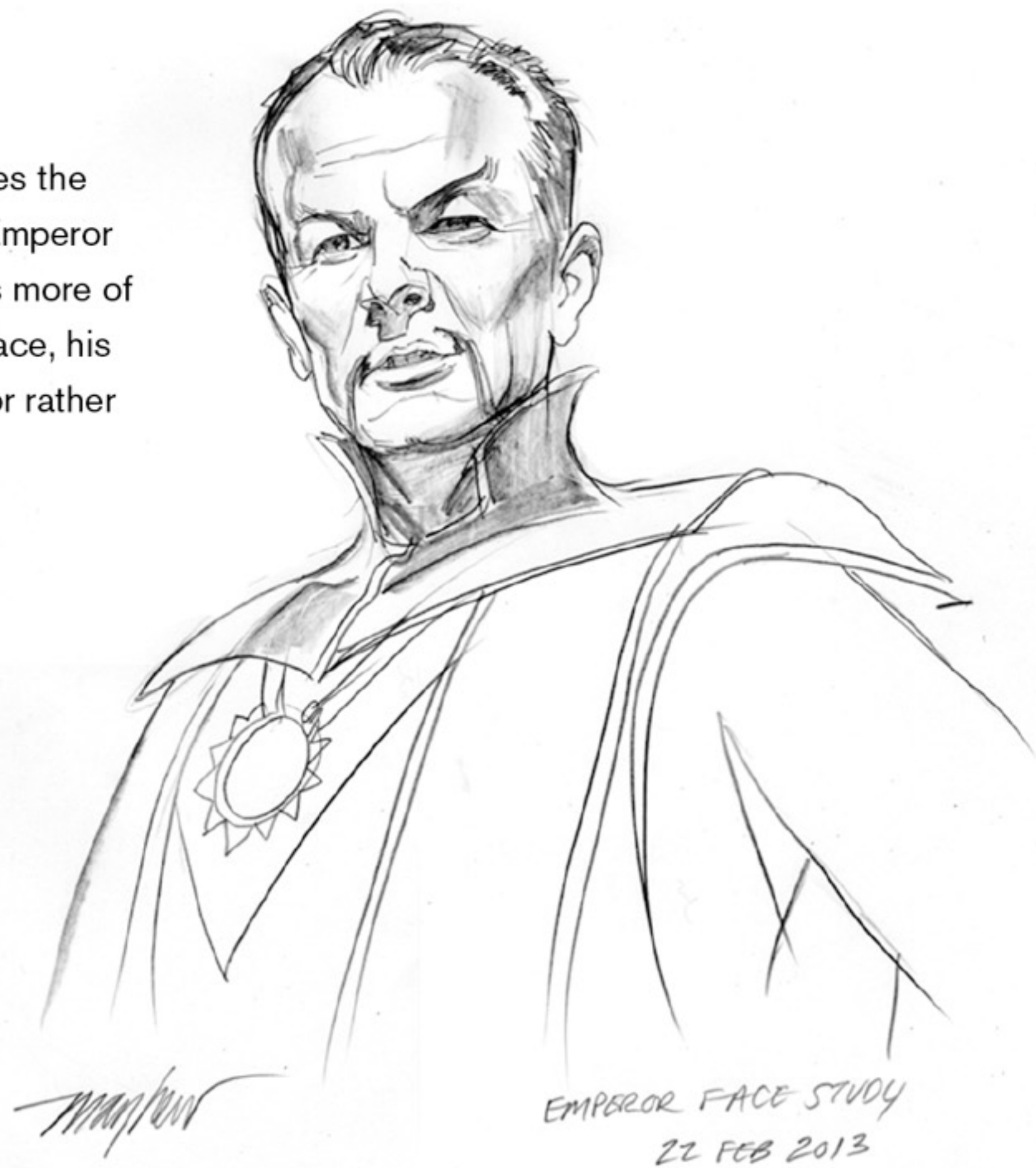
One of the biggest visual departures from what was eventually seen in the movies was the appearance of smuggler Han Solo. Rather than a human, he is an Ureallian, described in the screenplay as “a huge, green monster.” Mike Mayhew's first rough sketch of Han Solo set the tone for the alien rogue and was the *only* reference for the character available to issue #1 cover artists Nick Runge, Jan Duursema, and Douglas Wheatley.



BRING ON THE BAD GUYS

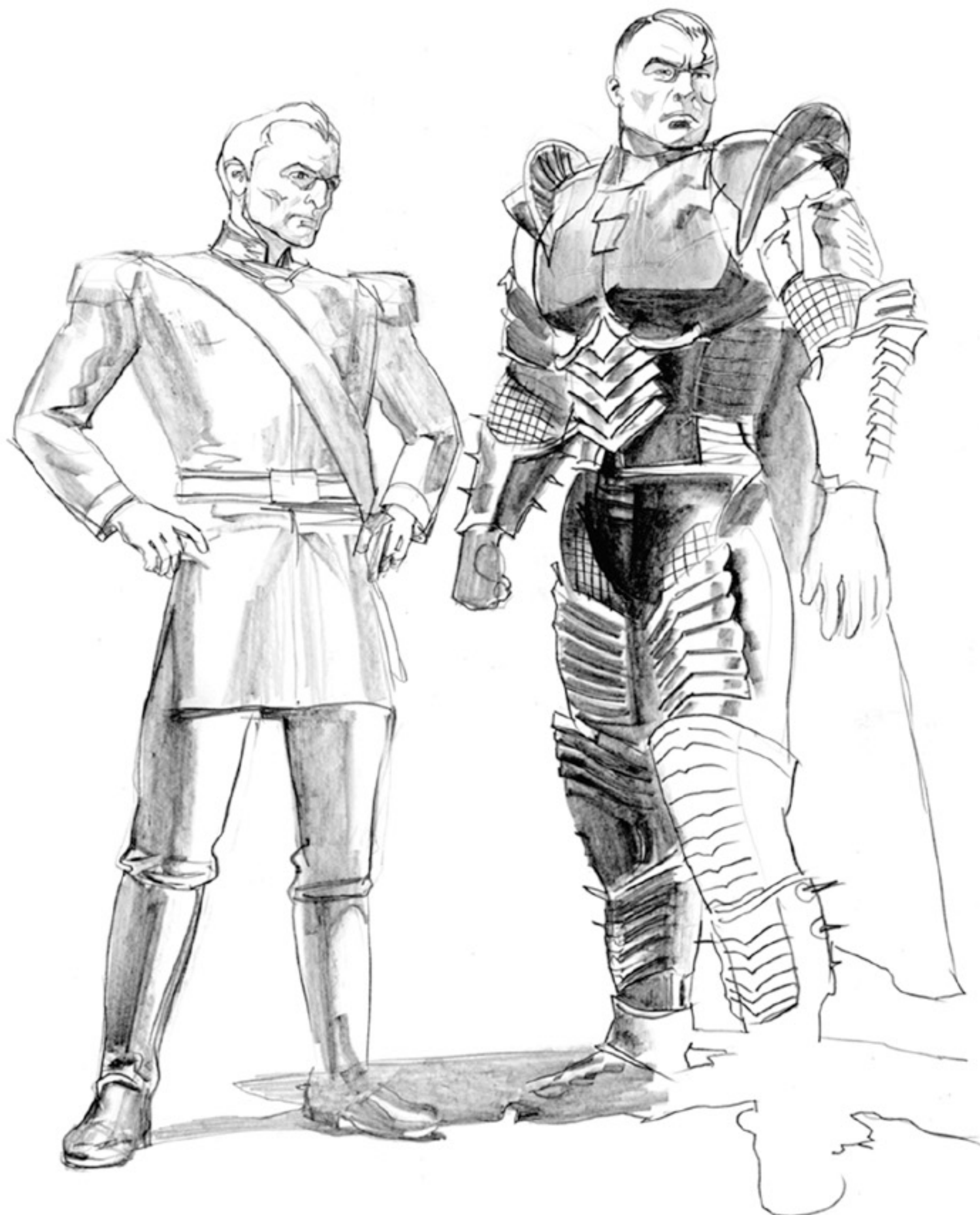


Of course there's an Emperor, and yes, he rules the galaxy. But unlike the fearsome, Force-using Emperor Palpatine from the films, this predecessor was more of a politician who won the support of the populace, his troops, and his minions through guile and favor rather than intimidation.



Among those willing to do the Emperor's bidding in return for rank and career advancement is Governor Crispin Hoedaack, who contrives to get himself promoted to First Lord of the Aquilae System. And all Hoedaack has to do to maintain that position is invade and conquer Aquilae.





Enter Imperial General Darth Vader. No Dark Lord of the Sith, this Vader is just a man—but a brutal and competent one.



Mayhew

GOV. HOEDAACK and DARTH VADER
22 FEB 2013

Still, one cannot now hear the name *Vader* without it conjuring certain images, so Mike Mayhew gave General Vader's uniform touches of the film Vader's armor and cape.



Mayhew
DARTH VADER
FACE STUDIES
FEB 24 2012

Hoedaack's ambition and Vader's troops and tanks would alone make a formidable combination, but they also command the Empire's latest weapon—a gigantic Space Fortress . . .

THE SITH



Even though Darth Vader is not among their number, the Sith still cast their shadow over the events in the story. As the opening scroll tells us, the Knights of the Sith are a ferocious and sinister warrior sect who have hunted the Jedi to near extinction.



Despite their ferocity in battle, not all of the Knights of the Sith are brutes. Prince Valorum presents himself as cultured and aloof—and proves to be a match for General Skywalker, at least strategically. Even Darth Vader is awed by Valorum's presence.



OTHER FORCES OF THE EMPIRE

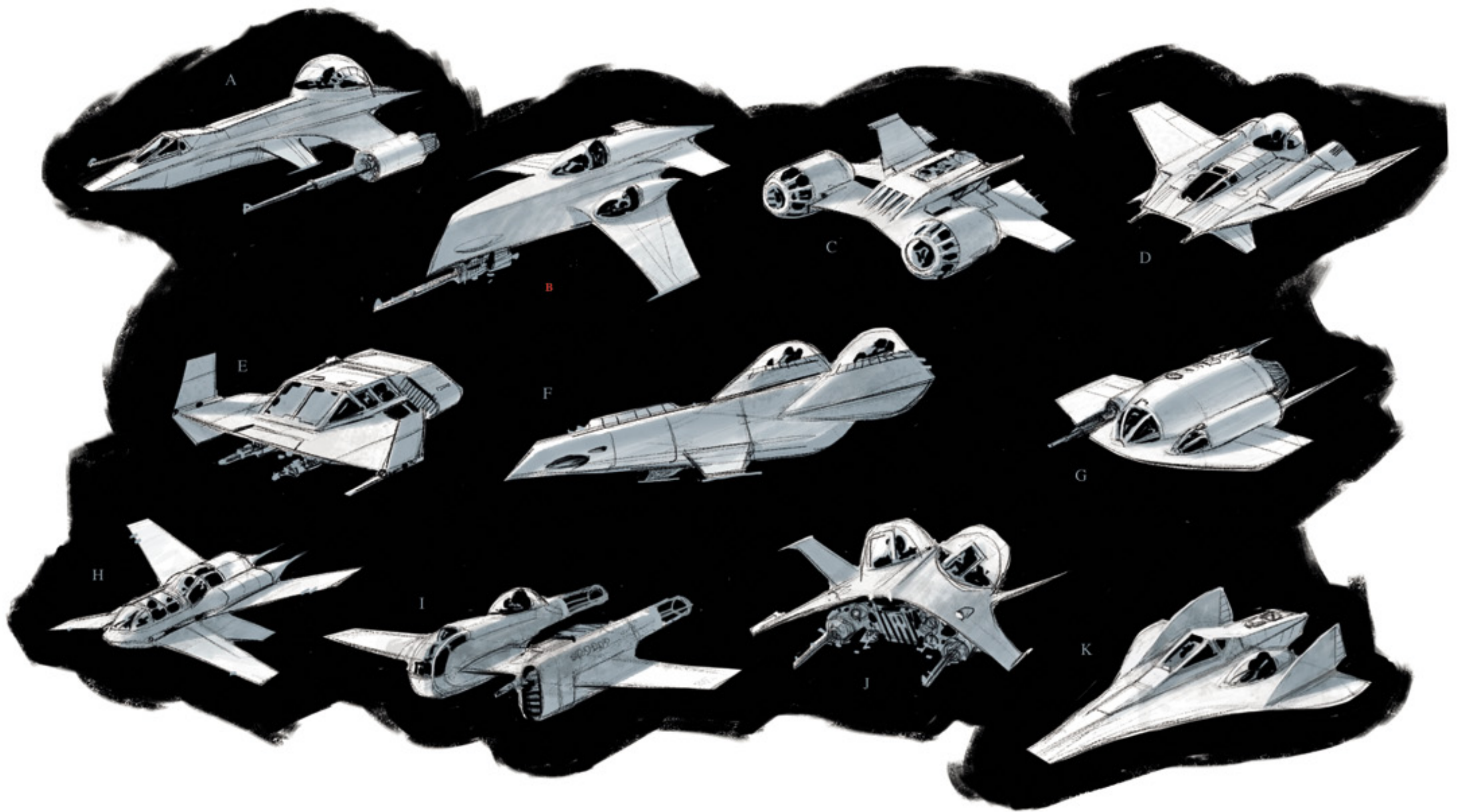


As in the films, the Empire commands vast resources in men and machines. But unlike the stormtroopers in the movies, the shocktroopers in *The Star Wars* (designed by Stéphane Roux) carry “lazerswords” into battle. But this still doesn't make them a match for the Jedi . . .

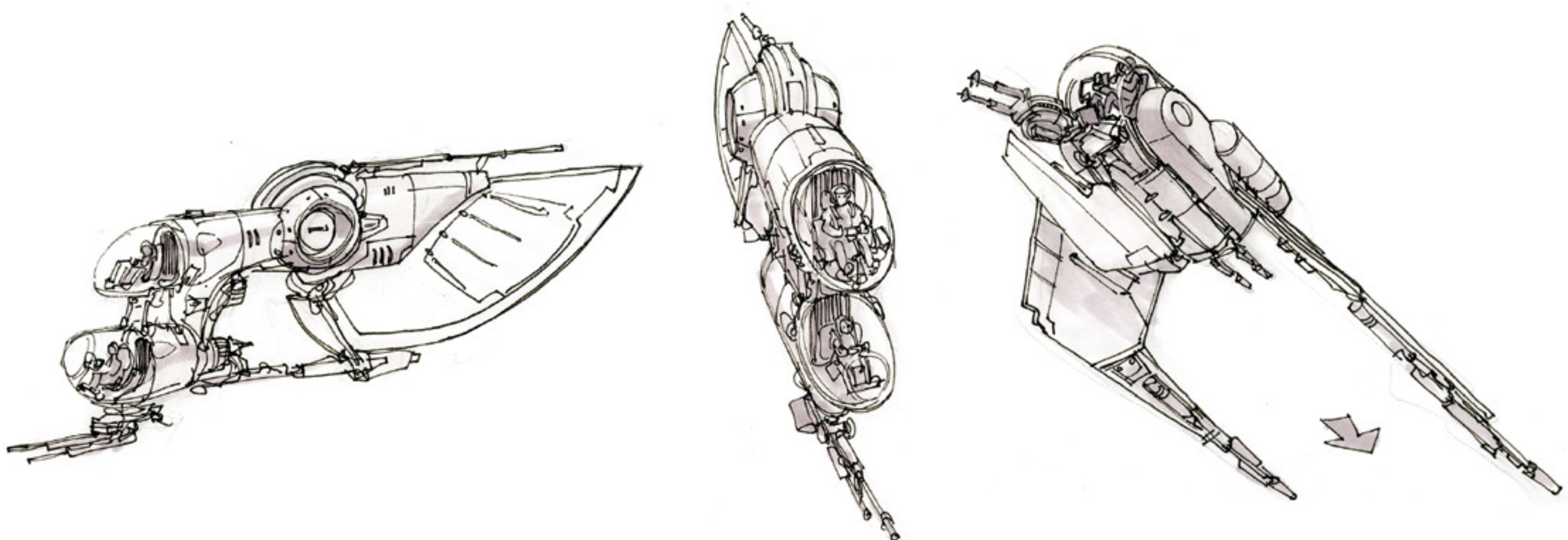
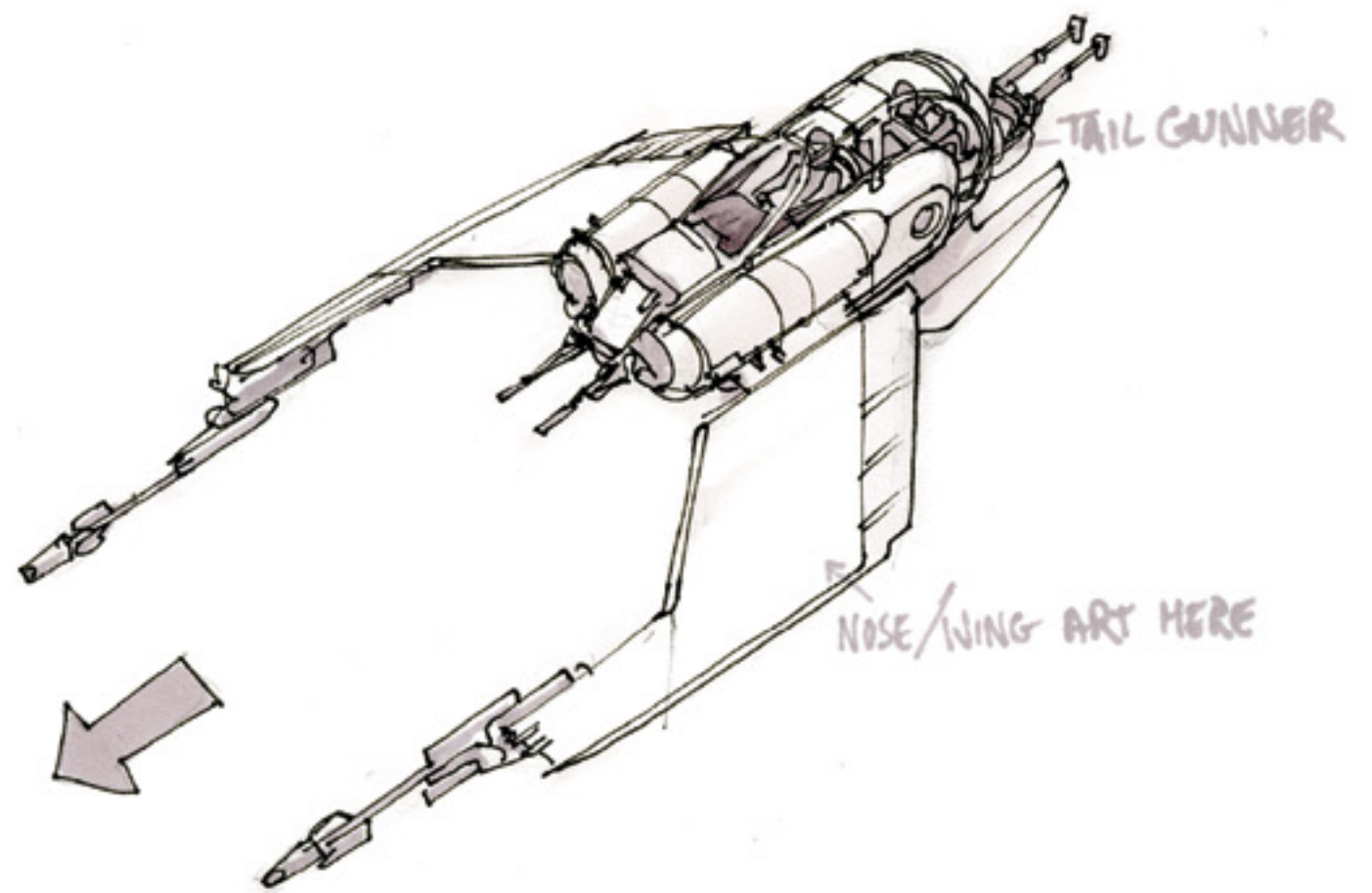


AQUILAEAN FIGHTERS

It wouldn't be much of a "star war" if the combatants weren't able to travel from one star system to another, and *The Star Wars* has its share of spaceships—although none that come close to any of the gigantic ships seen in the films.

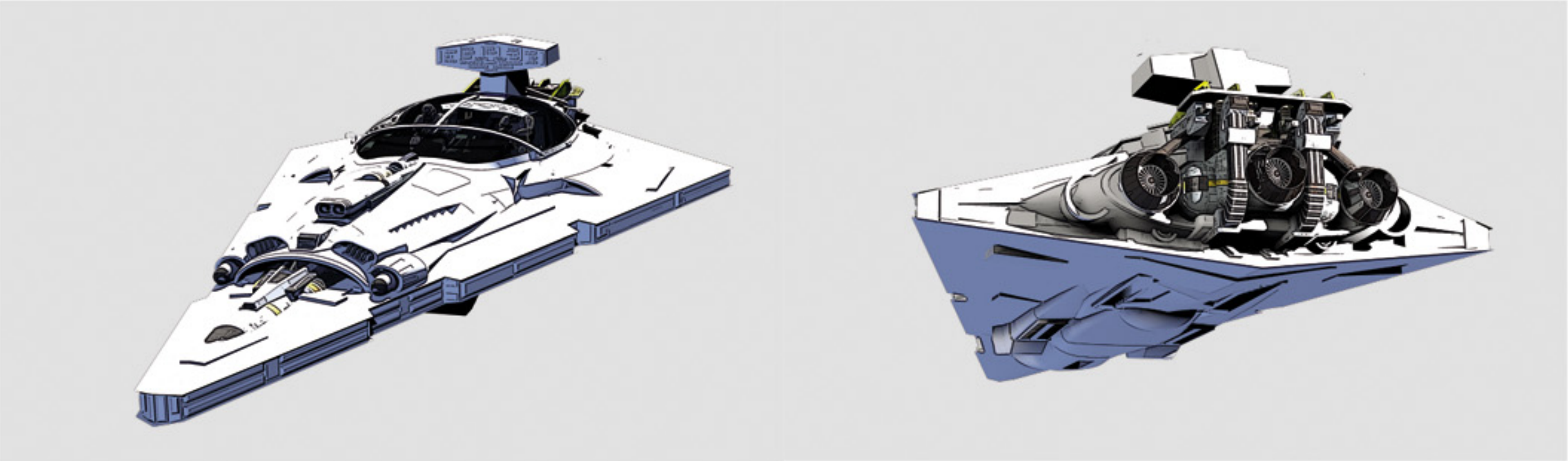
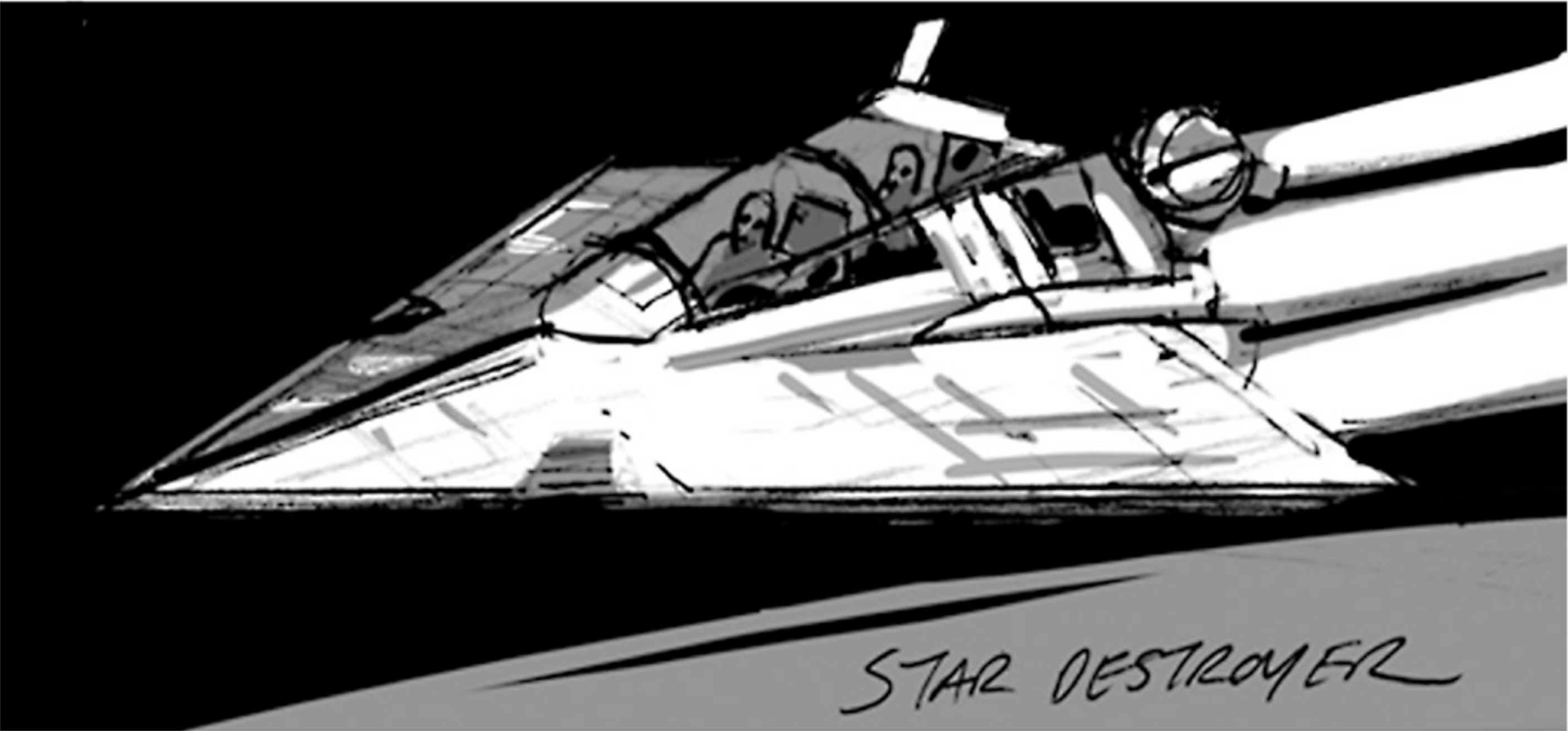
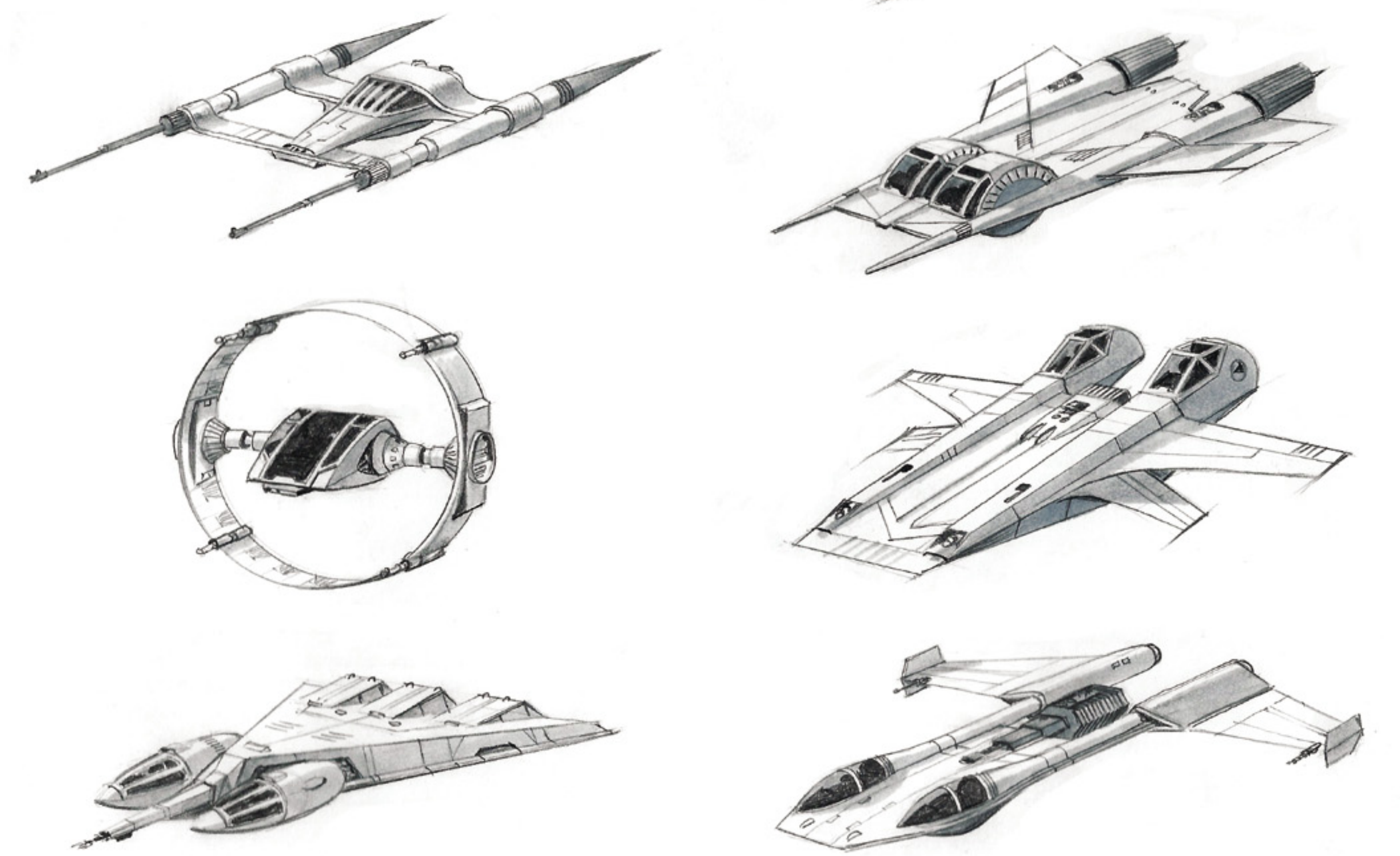


An interesting aspect is that all of the smaller craft in the story are specified as requiring a two-man crew—a pilot and a navigator—much like present-day fighter craft have a pilot and a radar intercept officer. The idea of an astromech droid (such as an R2 unit) taking on the responsibilities of an RIO didn't appear until a later draft of the screenplay. That's why all of artists Sean Cooke and Kilian Plunkett's spaceship designs included either two separate crew compartments or a single compartment large enough for two crew members.

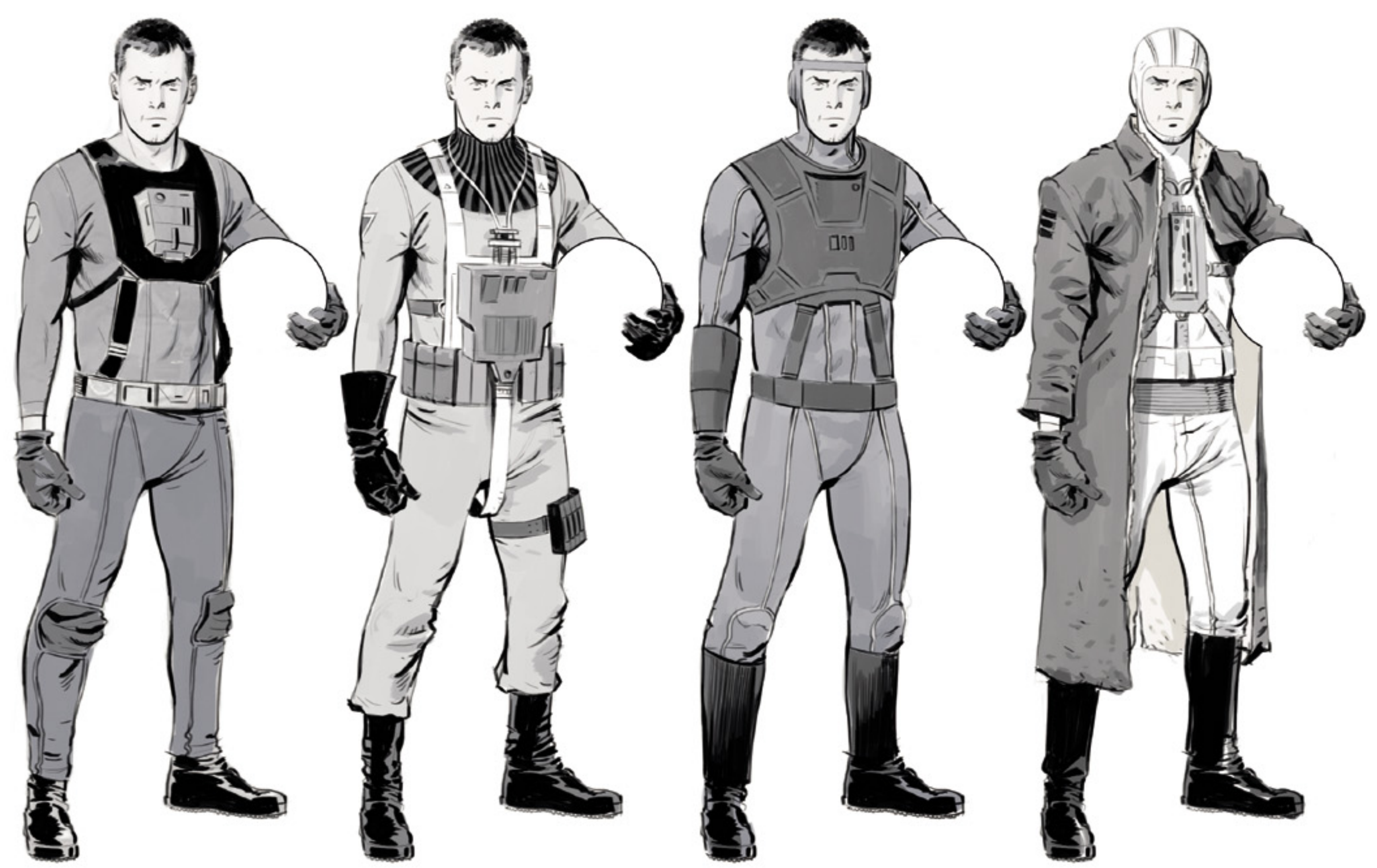


IMPERIAL STARDESTROYERS

In addition to the Aquilaeen fighters, Sean Cooke also produced a selection of possible Imperial fighters—before it was decided to go with Mike Mayhew’s film-inspired miniature Star Destroyer for this story’s two-man Stardestroyers.



PILOTS



Early on, pilots on both sides of the conflict were envisioned having larger roles than what played out on the pages of the comic. This is a dilemma that all writers and artists discover when they undertake an adaptation from another medium to comics: there is always less room on a page than you imagined.



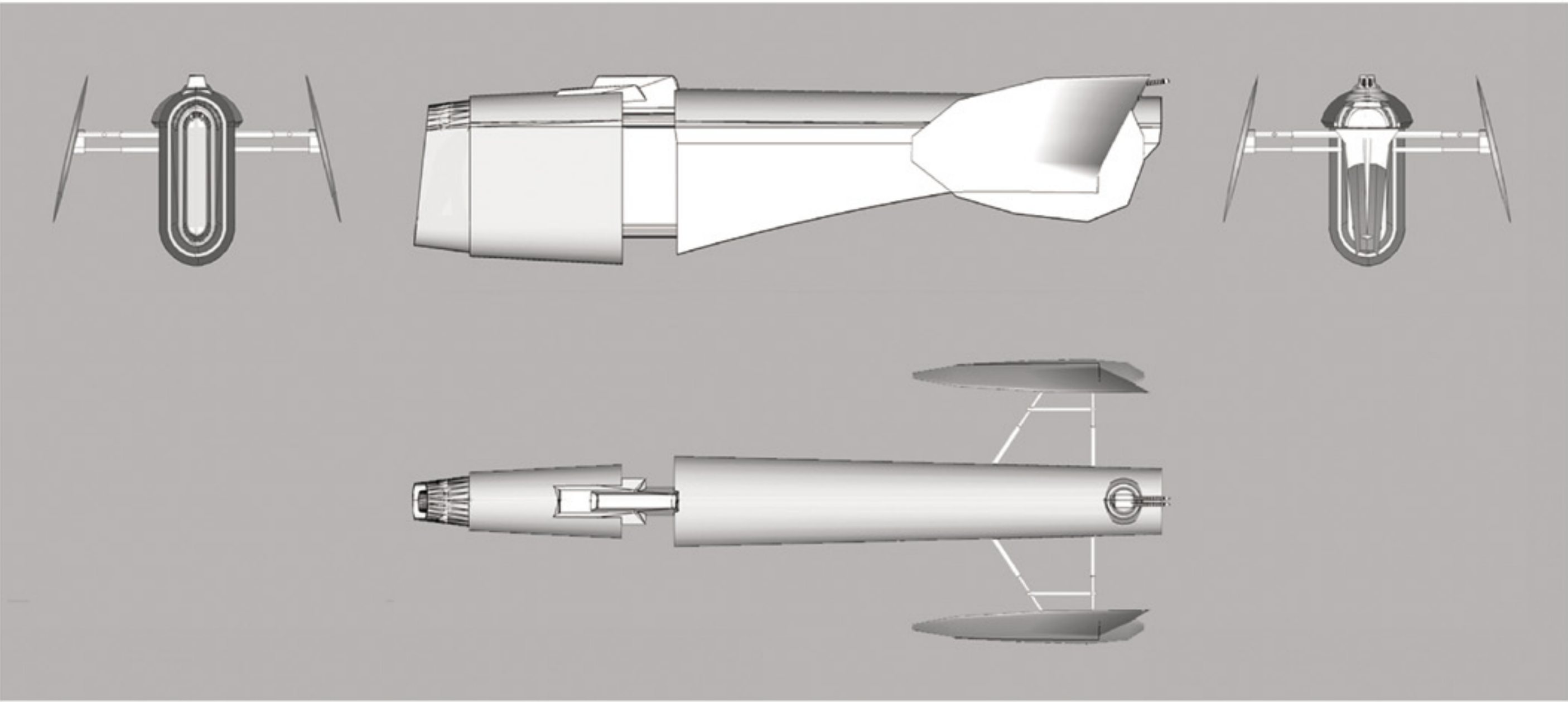
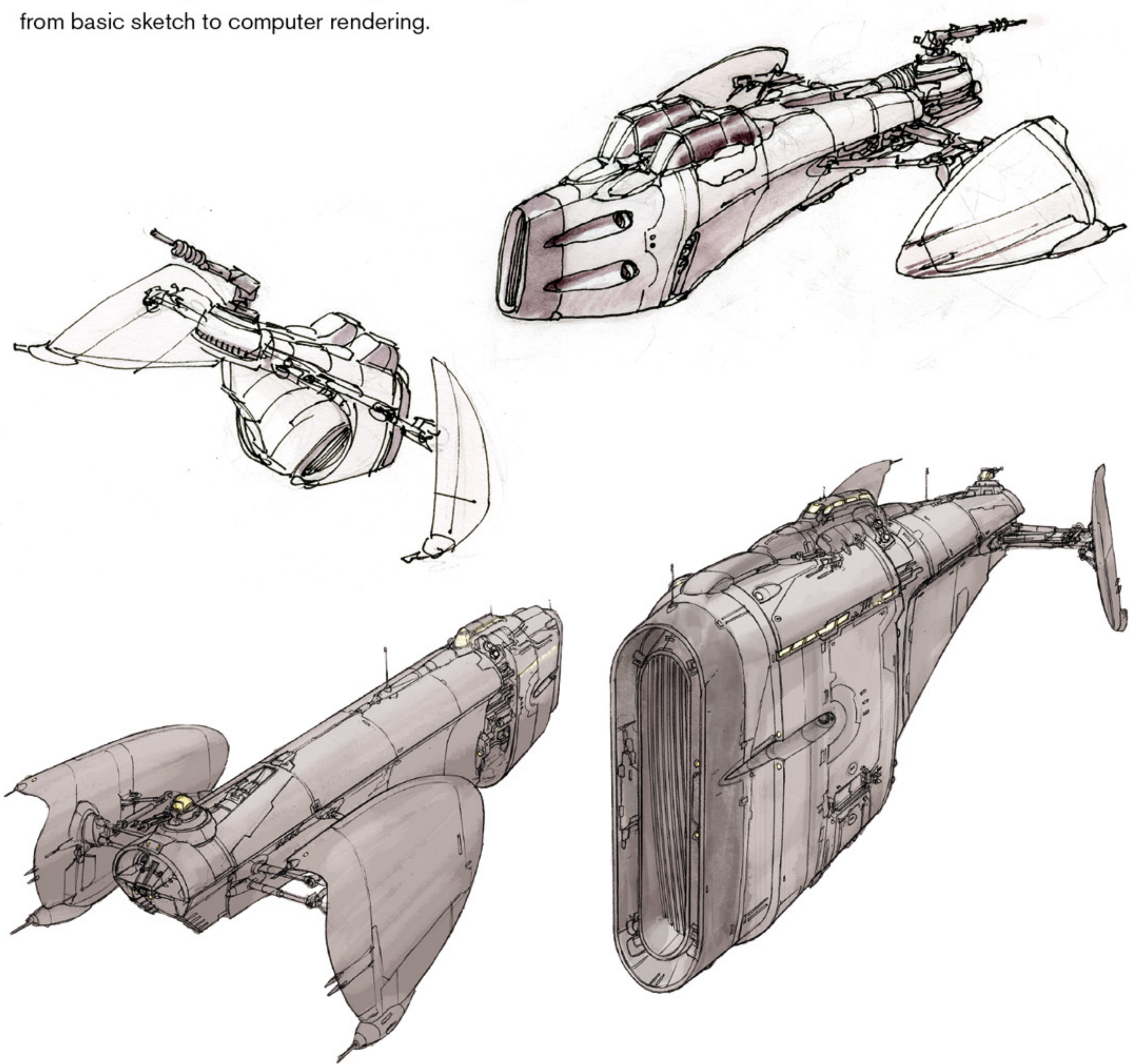
But, in planning for the possible, Sean Cooke provided a variety of designs.



BALTARIAN FREIGHTER

Originally proposed as the Imperial ship which Skywalker and company commandeer at the midpoint of the story, Kilian Plunkett's design ended up being used for the Baltarian Freighter on which Prince Valorum attempts to trap our heroes.

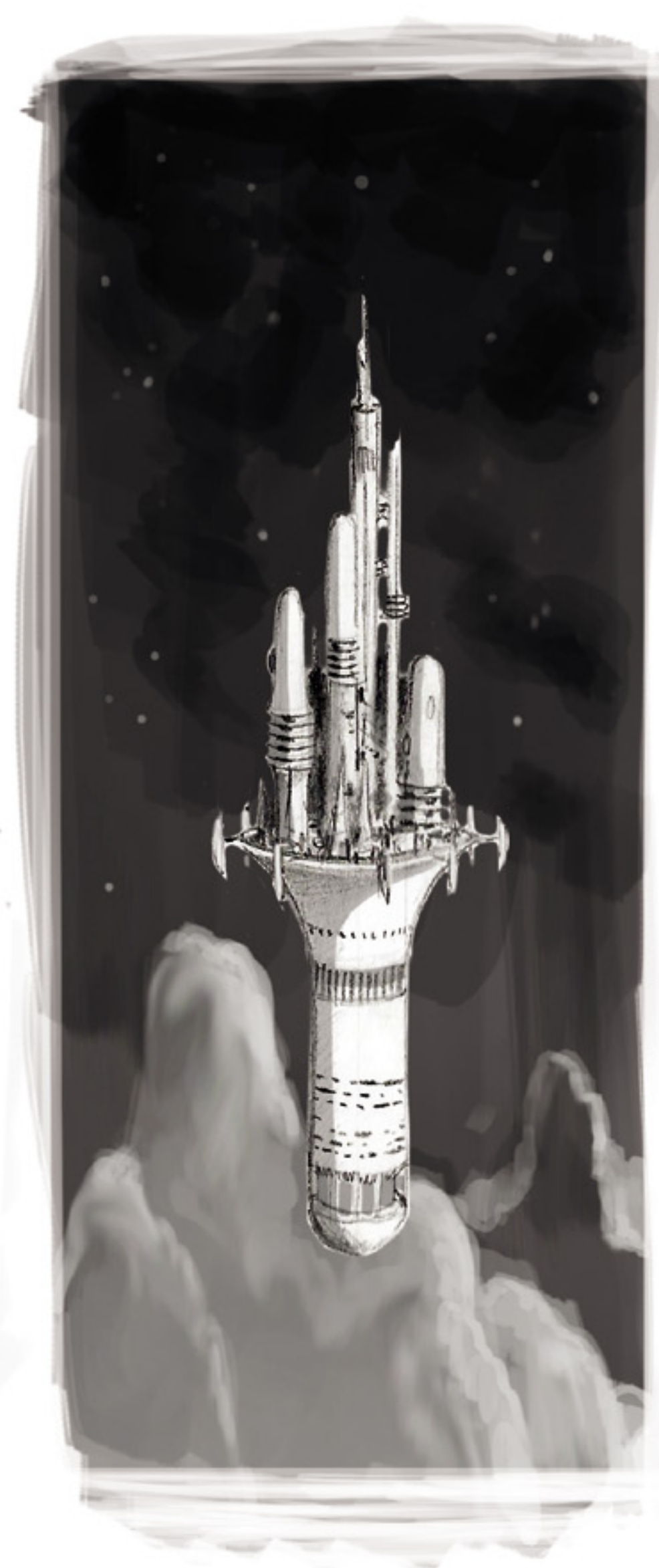
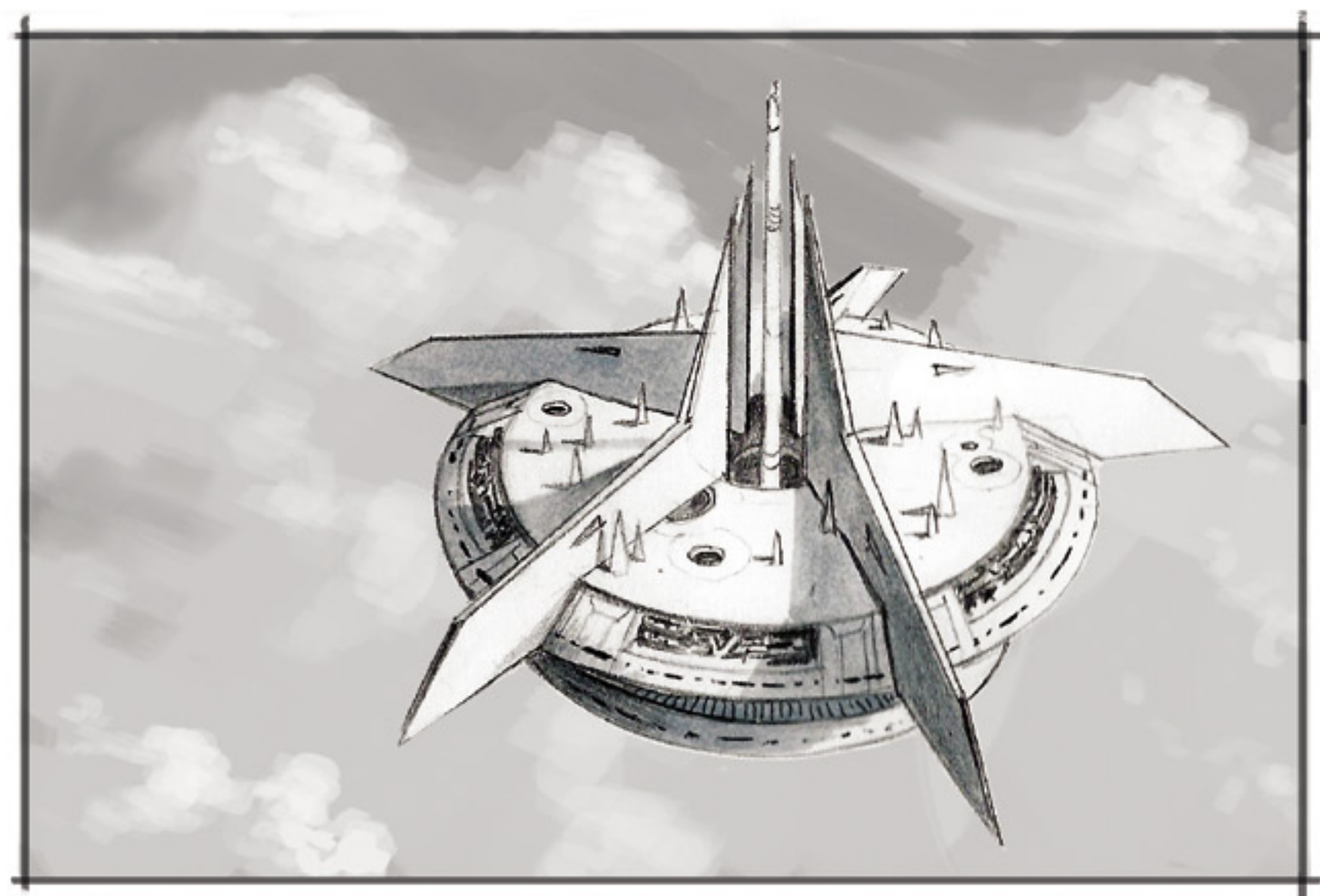
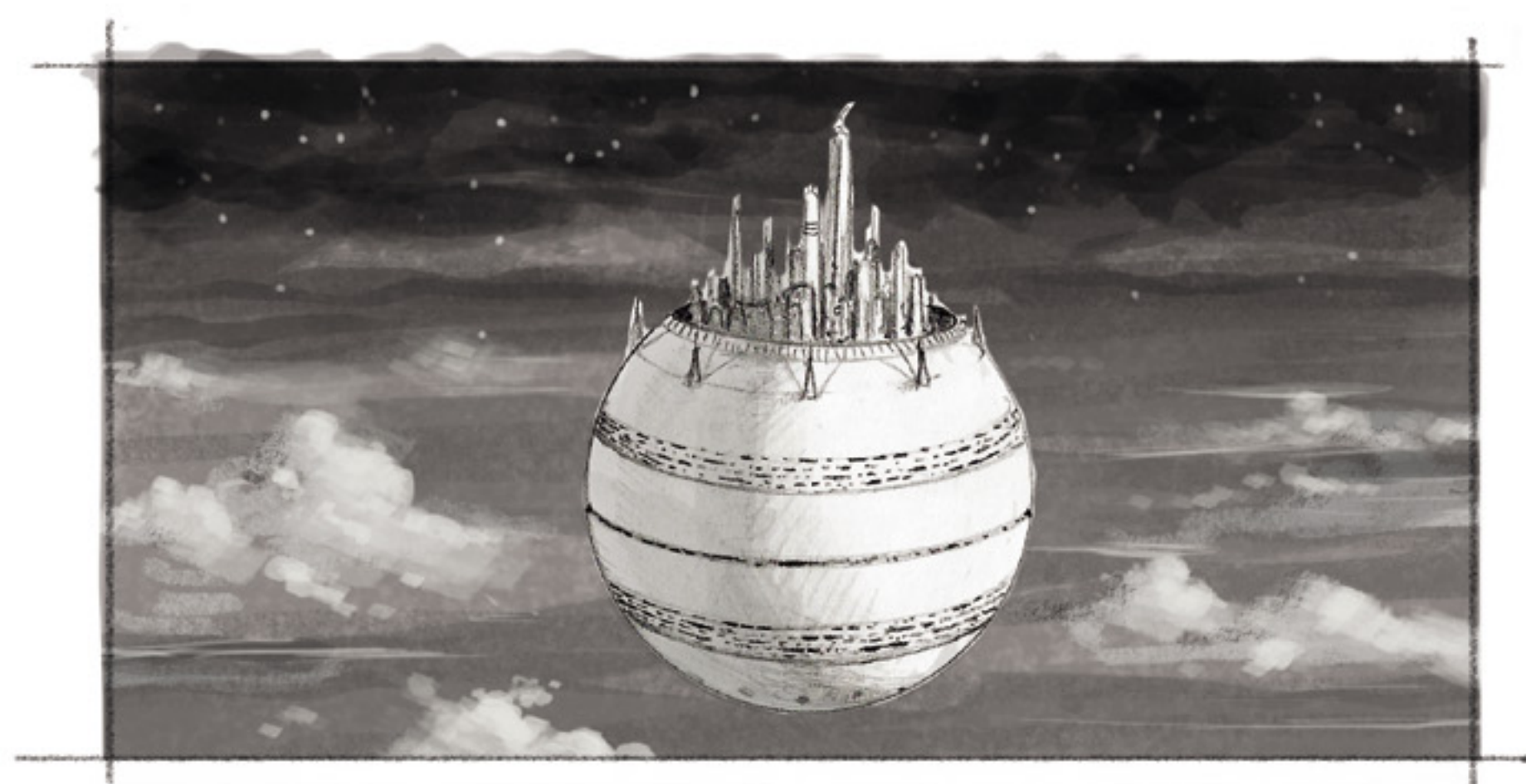
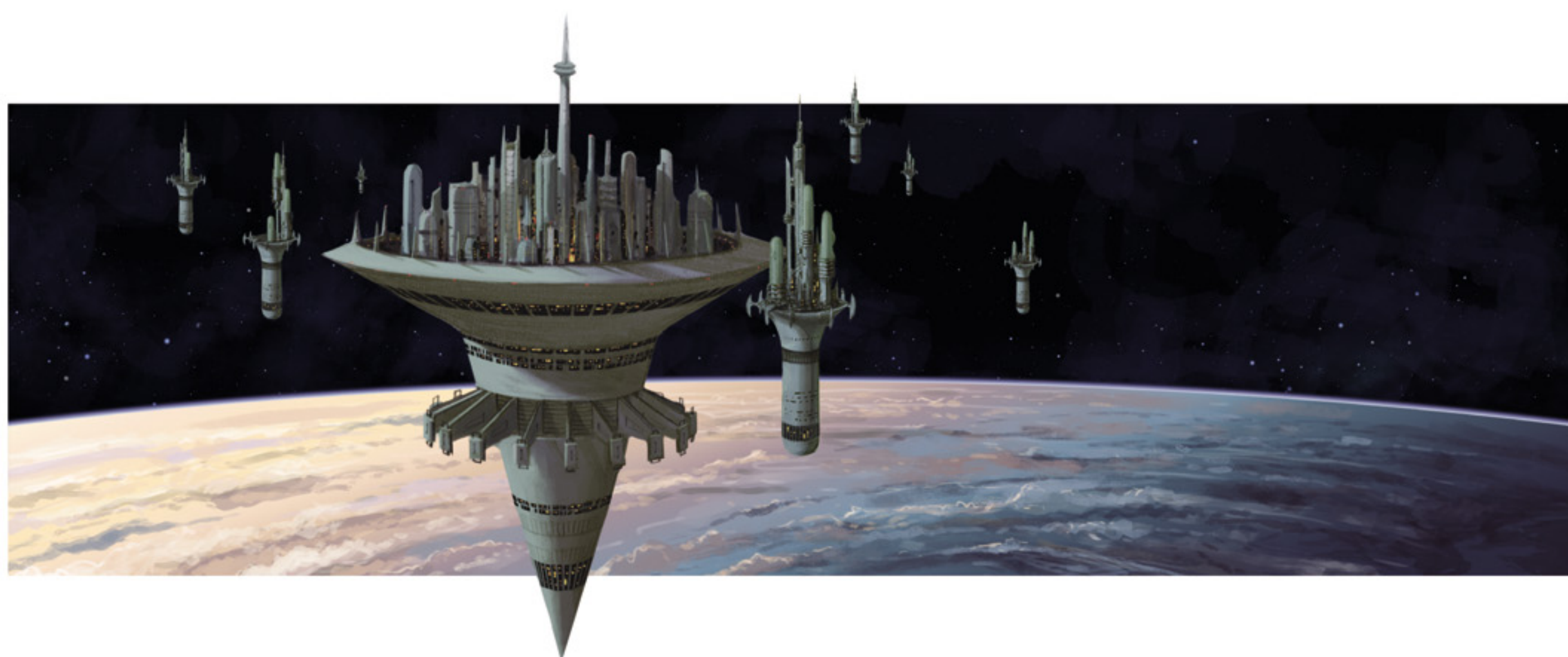
Here are the stages Plunkett's design went through— from basic sketch to computer rendering.



THE IMPERIAL CAPITAL

Forget Coruscant. In *The Star Wars*, the capital of this Empire is the gaseous planet Alderaan, and the city of the same name which floats majestically above it. Alderaan is the clear precursor to Bespin's Cloud City from *The Empire Strikes Back*, but more regal and less industrial. (You've no doubt noticed that many of the place and character names which originated in *The Star Wars* showed up later in the movies—usually applied to all-new locations or characters.)

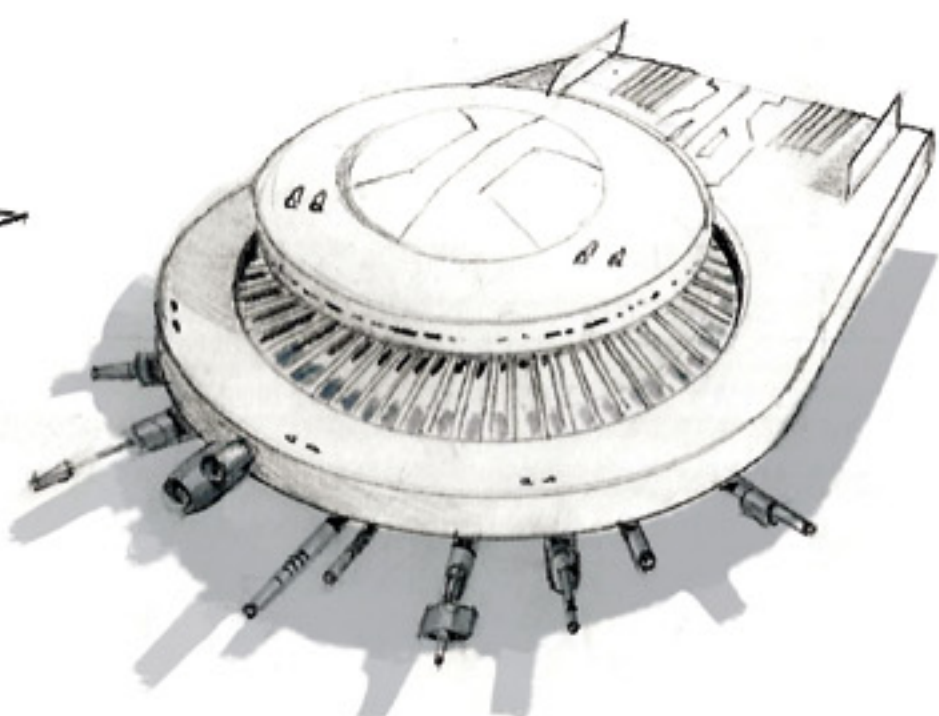
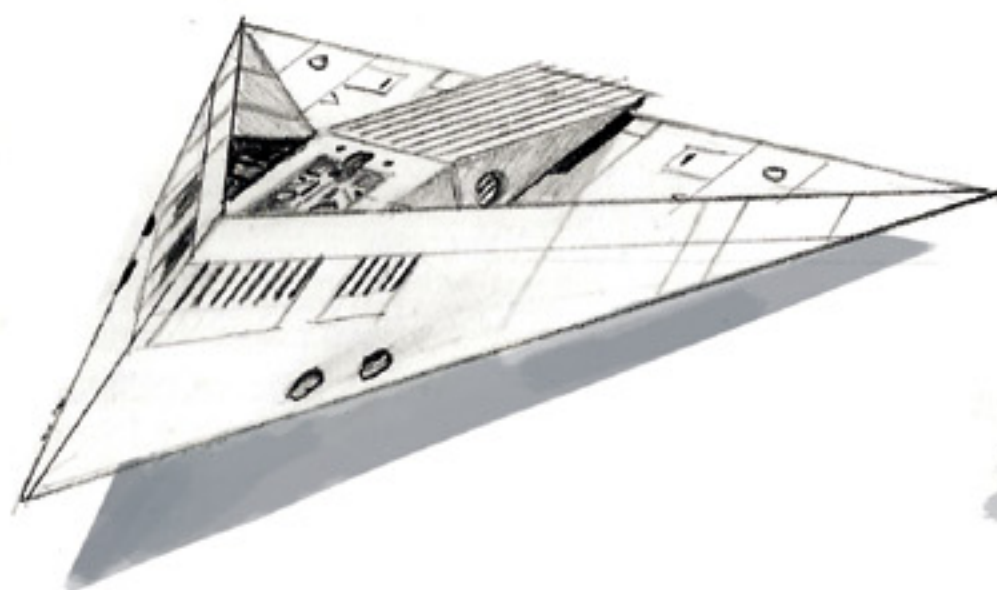
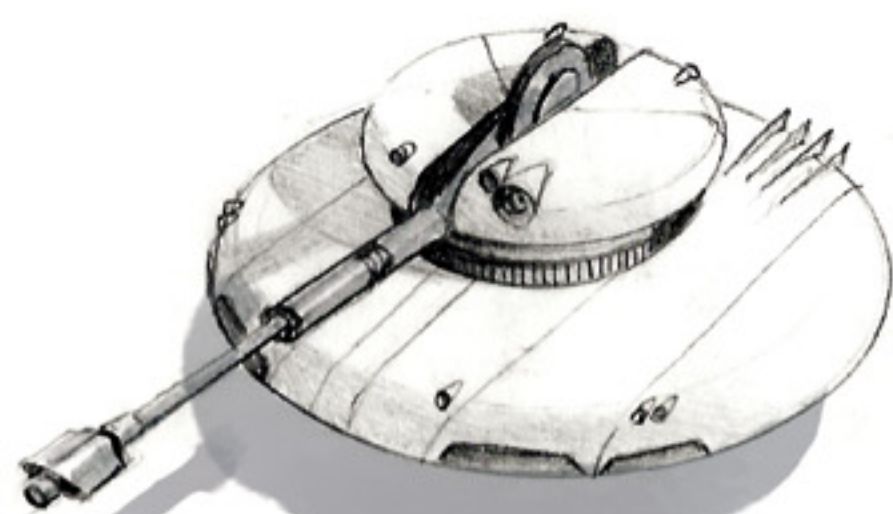
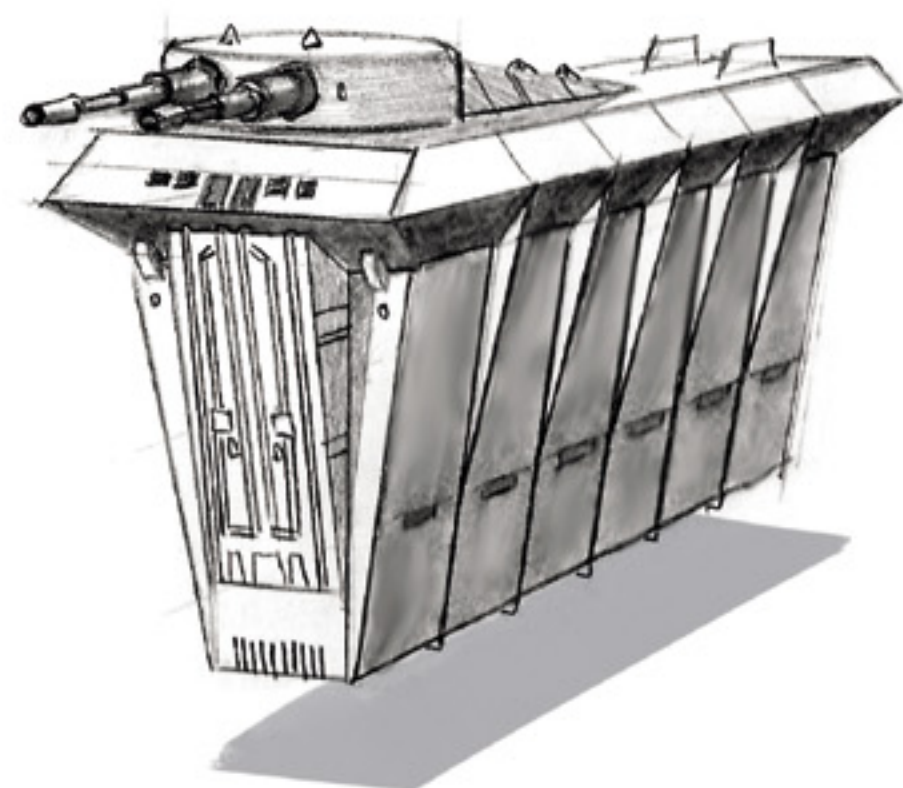
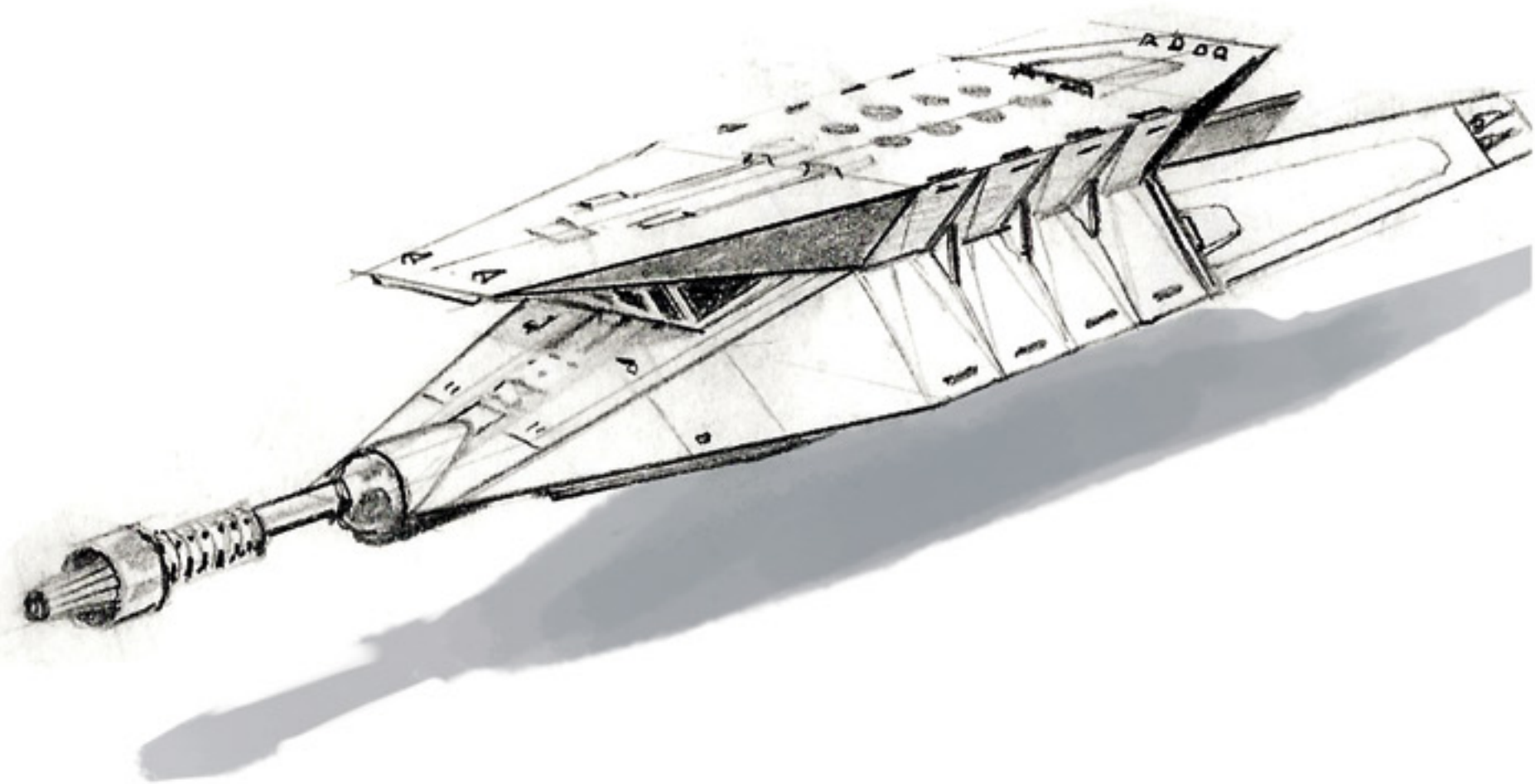
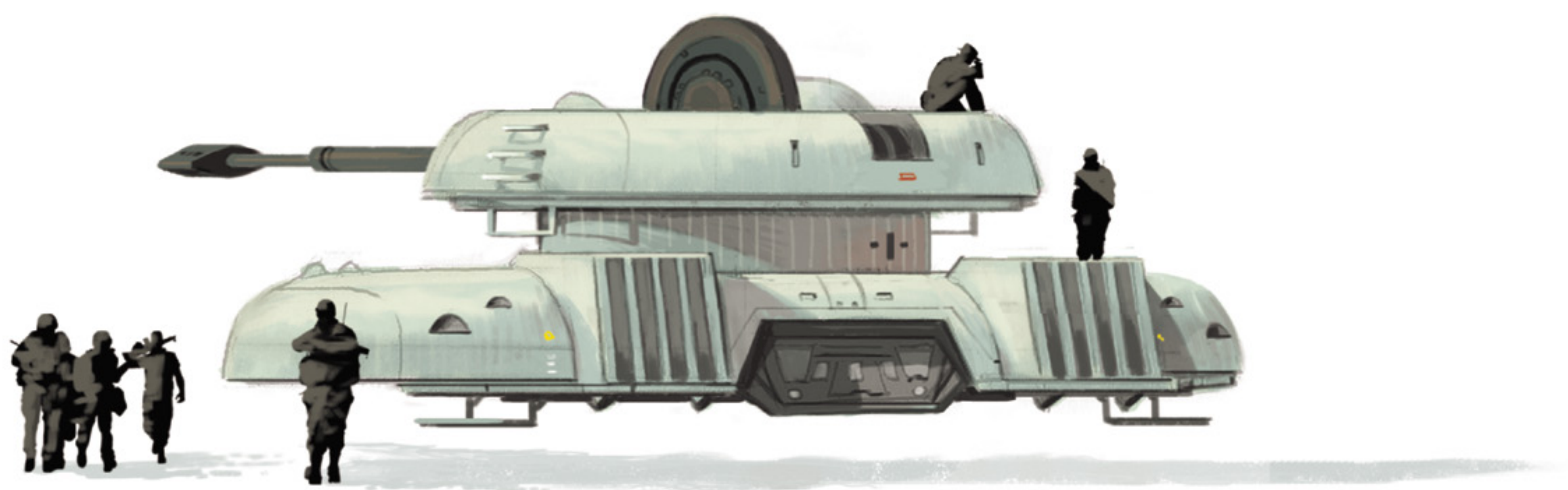
Artist Sean Cooke, who supplied a number of designs for this project, produced a variety of floating cities from which to choose.



IMPERIAL AIR TANKS

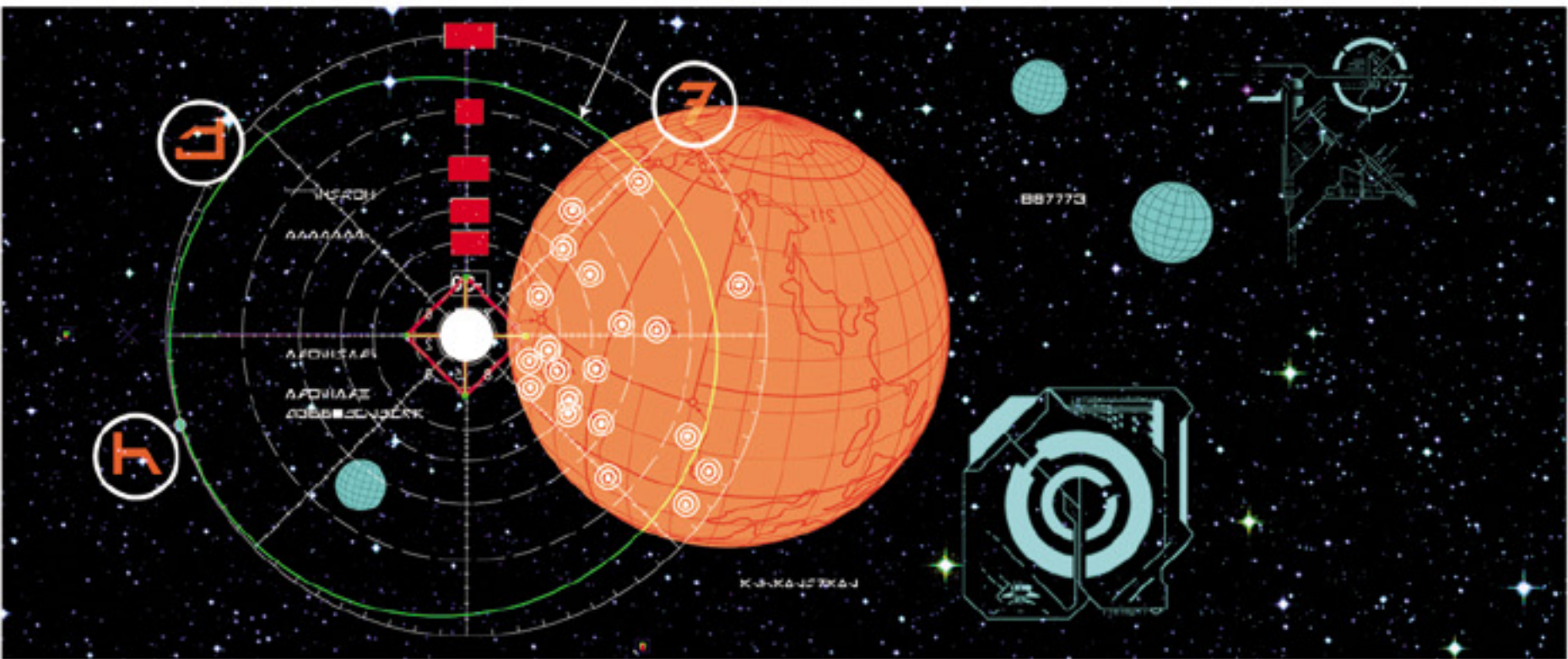


Among the Empire’s primary assault vehicles, the “air tanks” in the rough-draft screenplay eventually saw life on the big screen as the Trade Federation’s hover tanks. Sean Cooke also provided a number of diverse choices for this design.



AND SO MUCH MORE . . .

Some characters and vehicles in *The Star Wars* were inspired by images from the films or by the early designs created by Ralph McQuarrie, Colin Cantwell, and others. But most of what you see in the comic had to be created from scratch, based on how the artists involved were inspired by the ways in which George Lucas described them in the screenplay. Sometimes it felt best to hark back to something established in the films. Other times there existed no clear analog in the films for what was called for in the screenplay. But everything necessary to tell the story had to be designed—usually by Mike Mayhew.



COVERS



Thumbnail sketch for an unused cover for issue #1.



Thumbnail sketch for an unused cover for issue #3.

These are several of cover artist Nick Runge's rough sketches for proposed covers. Because covers are required for solicitation so far in advance of when the comics go on sale, Nick also found himself lending a hand in designing characters or creatures for which the interiors had not yet been completed.



Thumbnail sketch for the cover of issue #5.

VARIANT COVERS

For those who didn't have an opportunity to acquire them, here are some of the variant covers from issue #1.



Illustration by Jan Duursema, colors by Brad Anderson



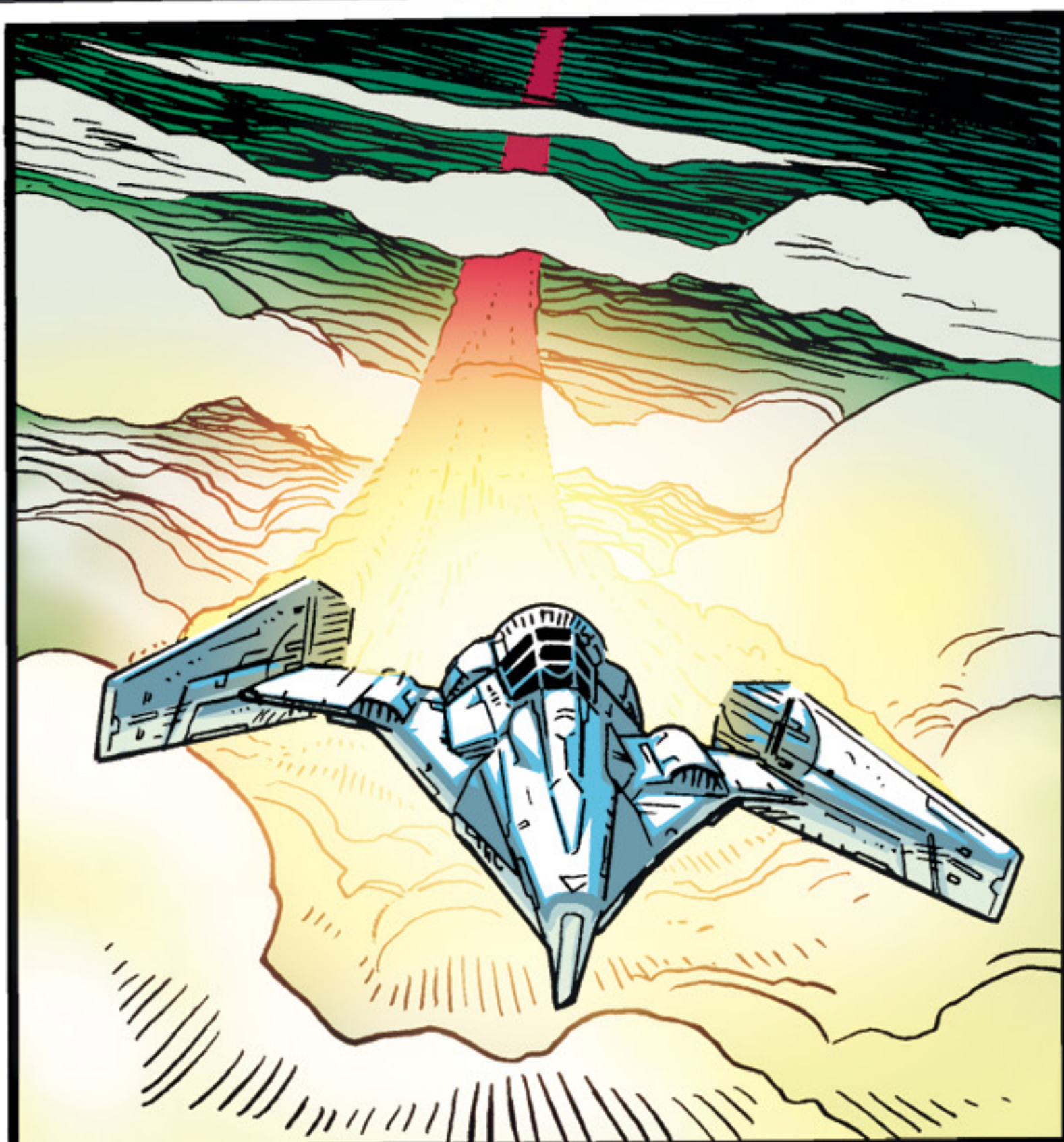
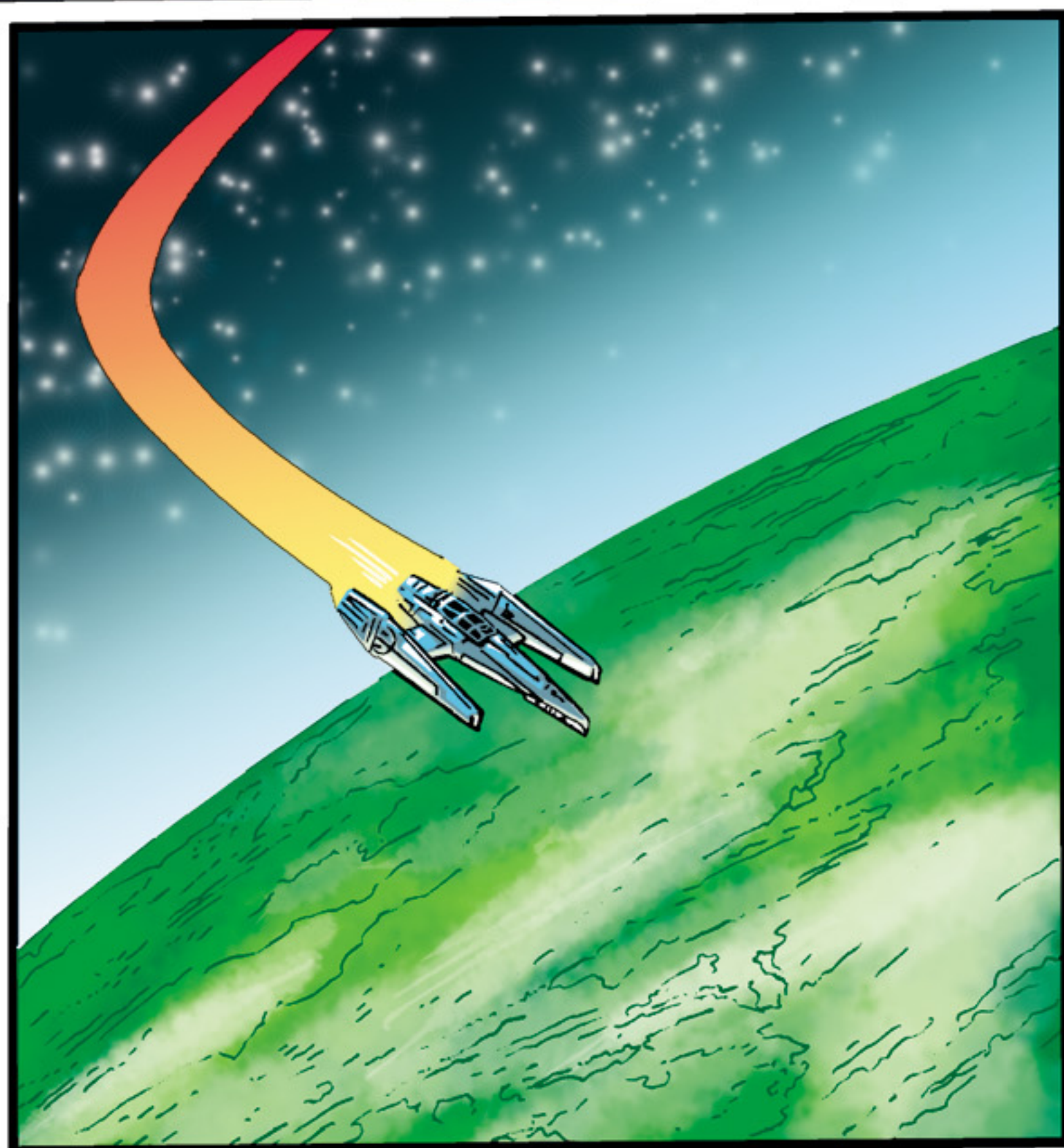
Illustration by Douglas Wheatley

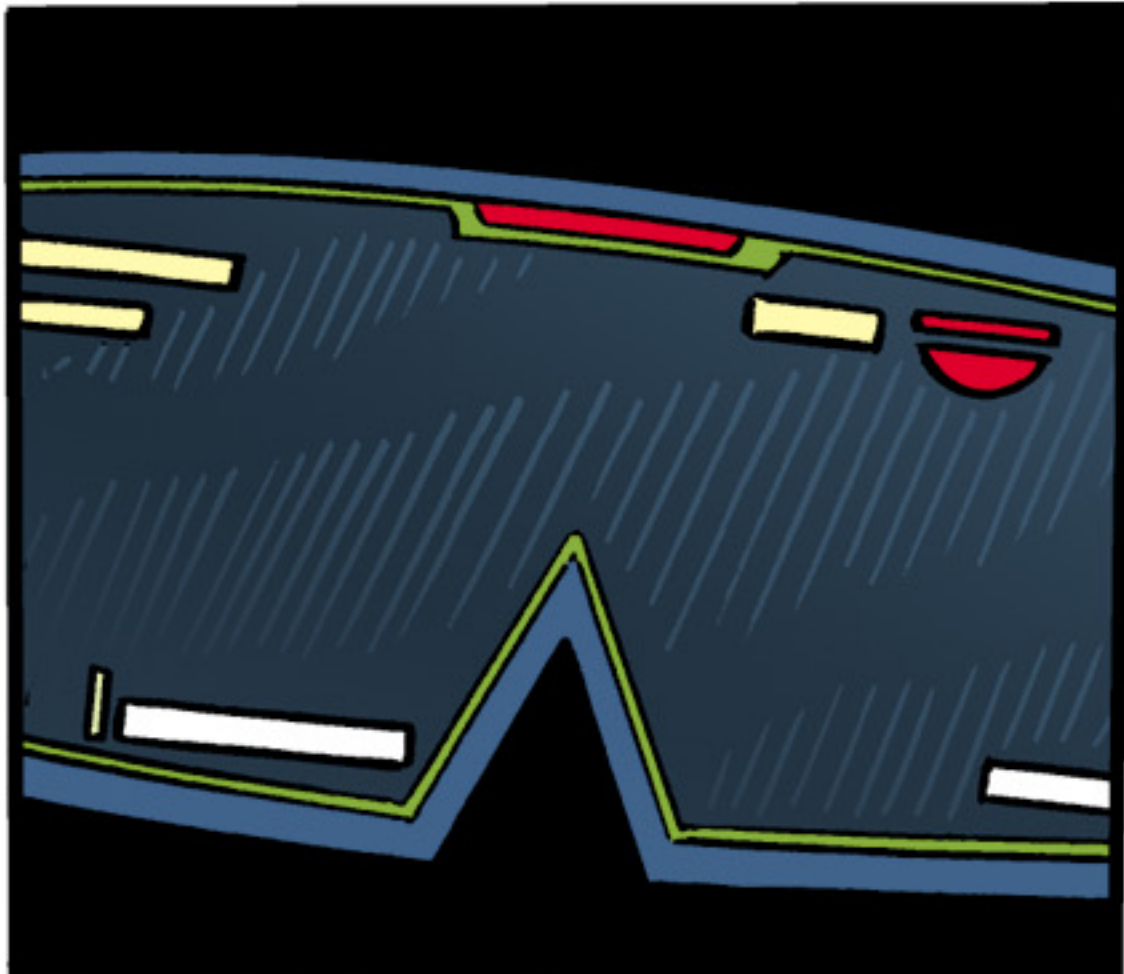
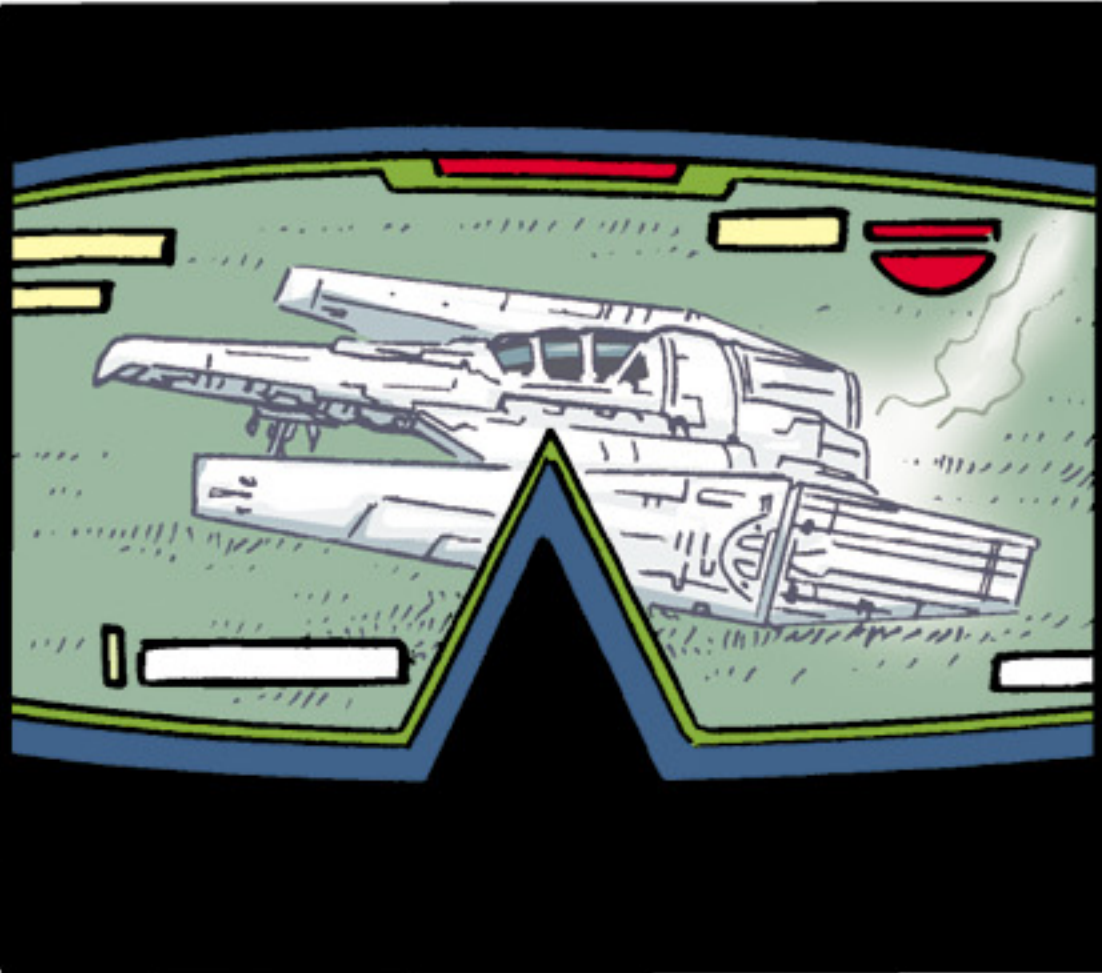
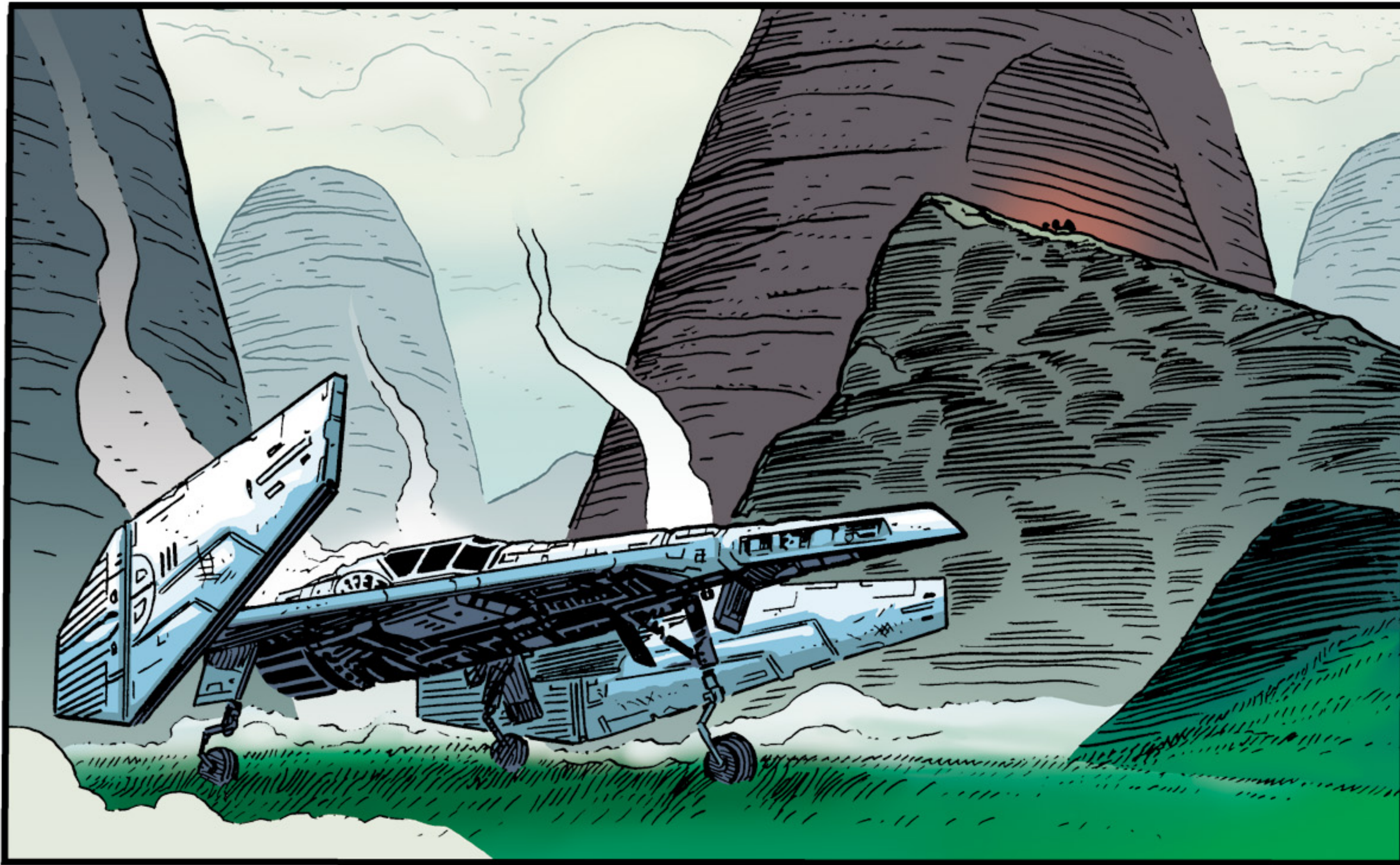


Illustration by John Cassaday, colors by Dave Stewart

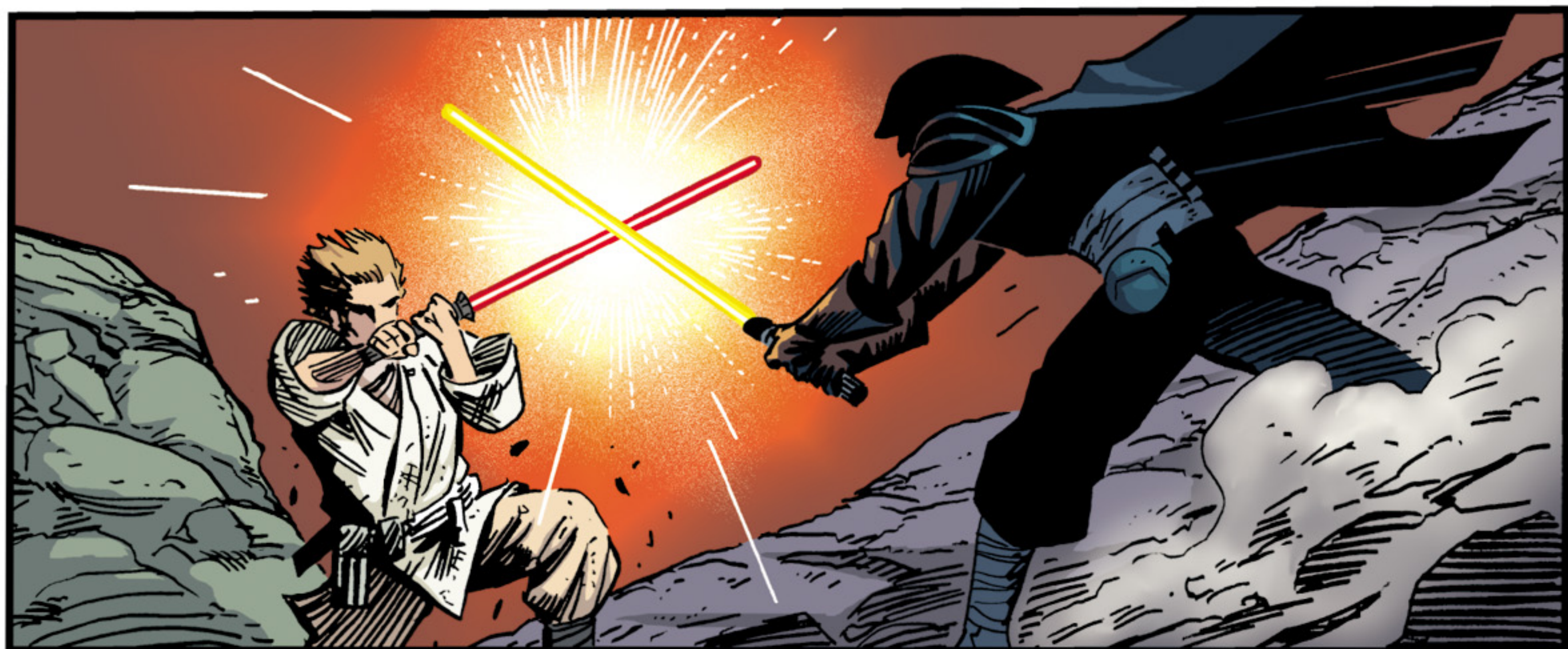
HOW IT BEGAN

Last, but certainly not least, we want to show you the pages originally commissioned from artist Scott Kolins that were shown to George Lucas to obtain his blessing for this project. These were produced from a plot-style script by J. W. Rinzler, highlighting key scenes from the original screenplay. Colors are by Dan Jackson . . .

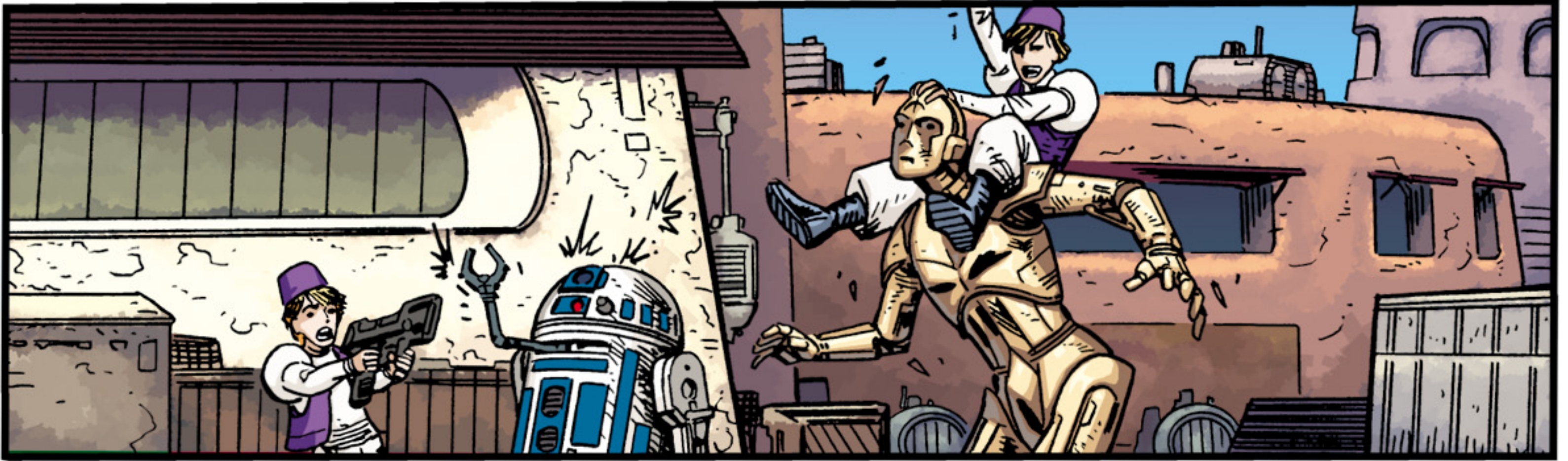


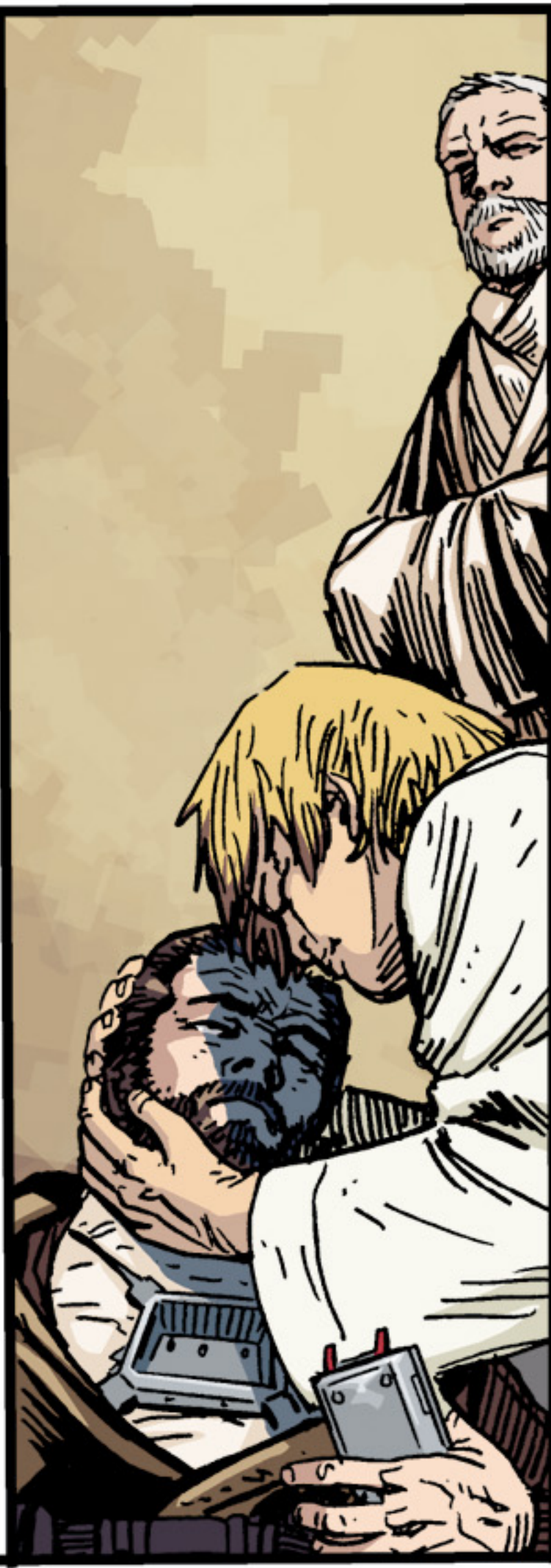
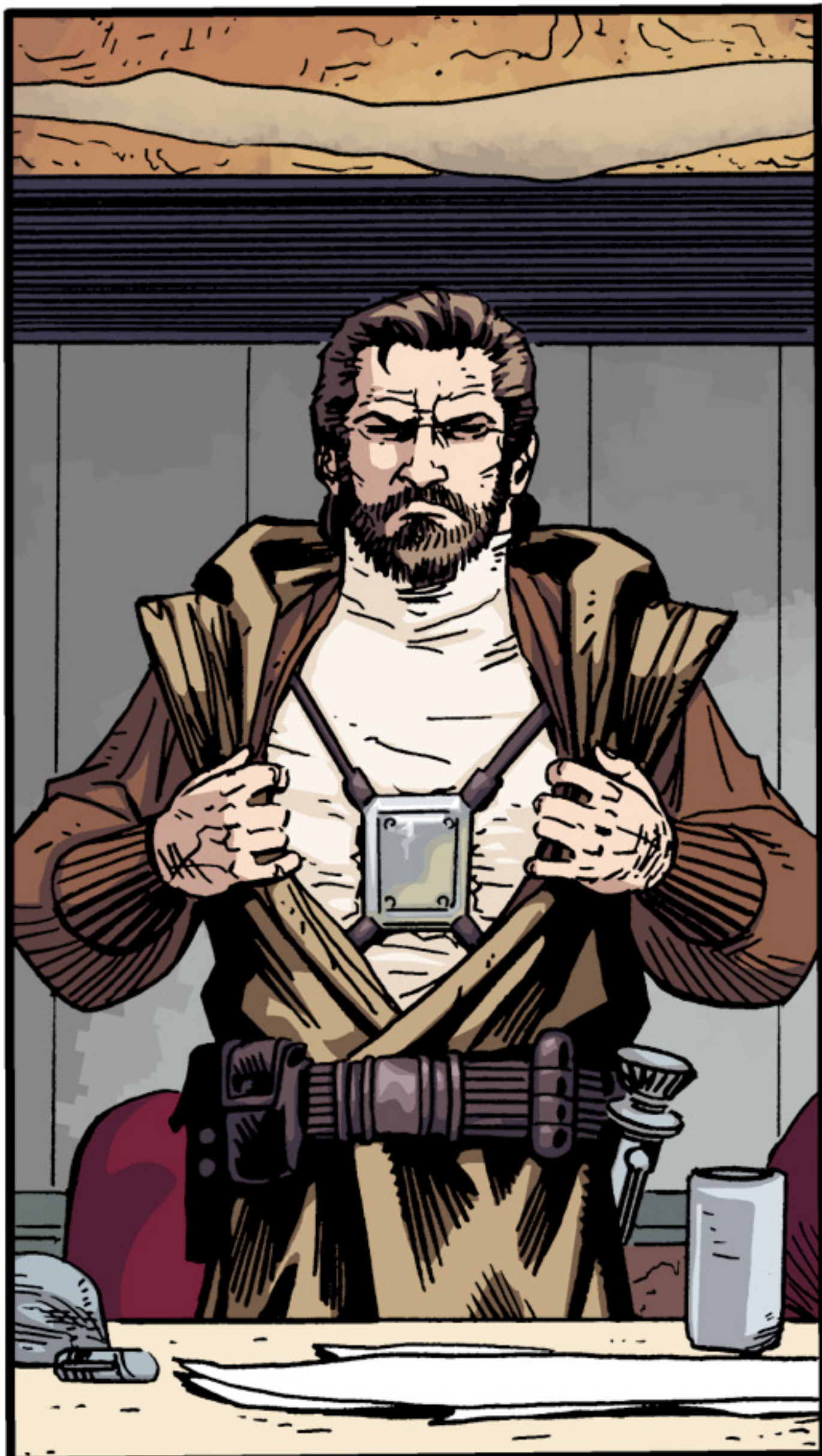


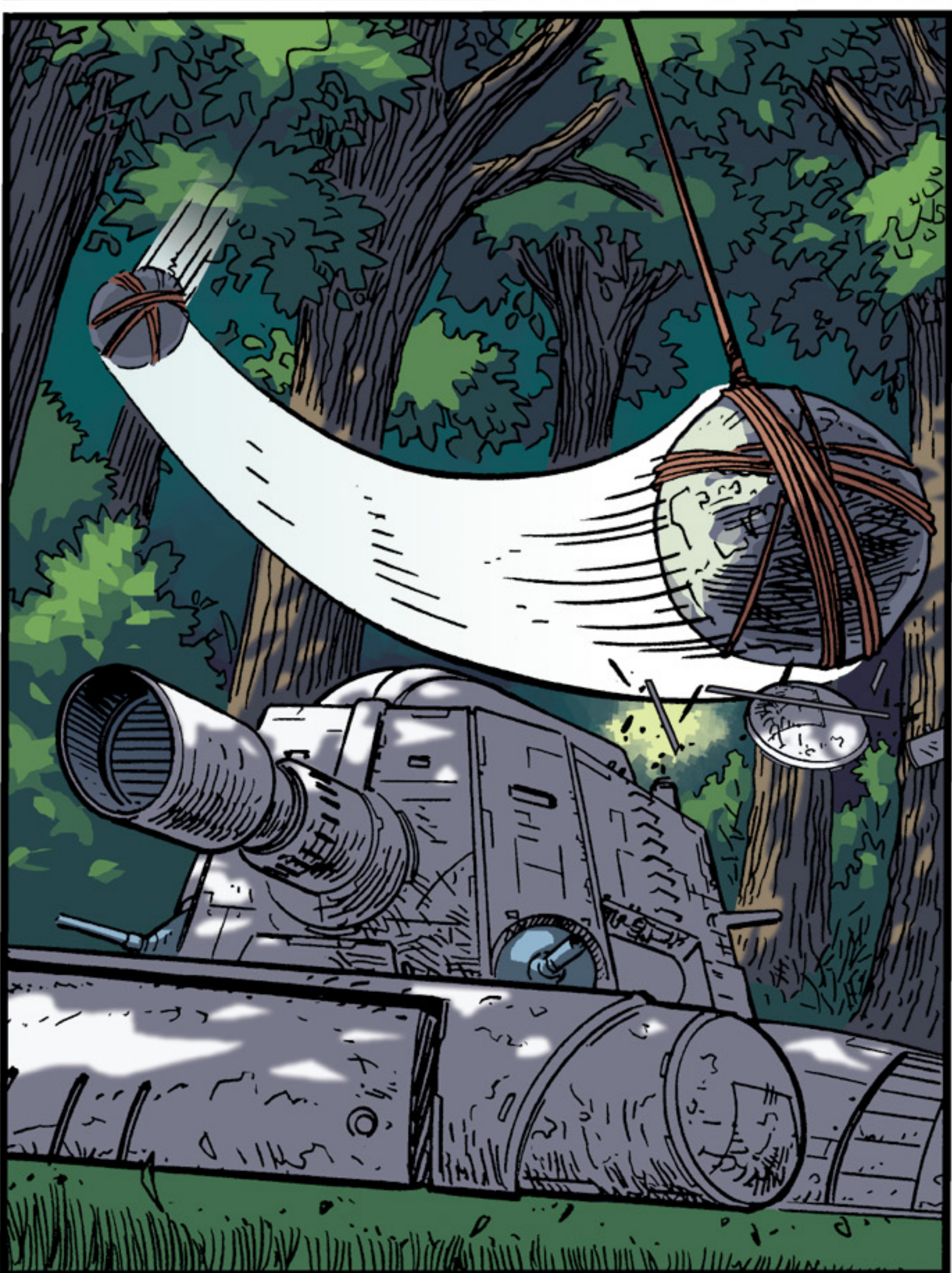


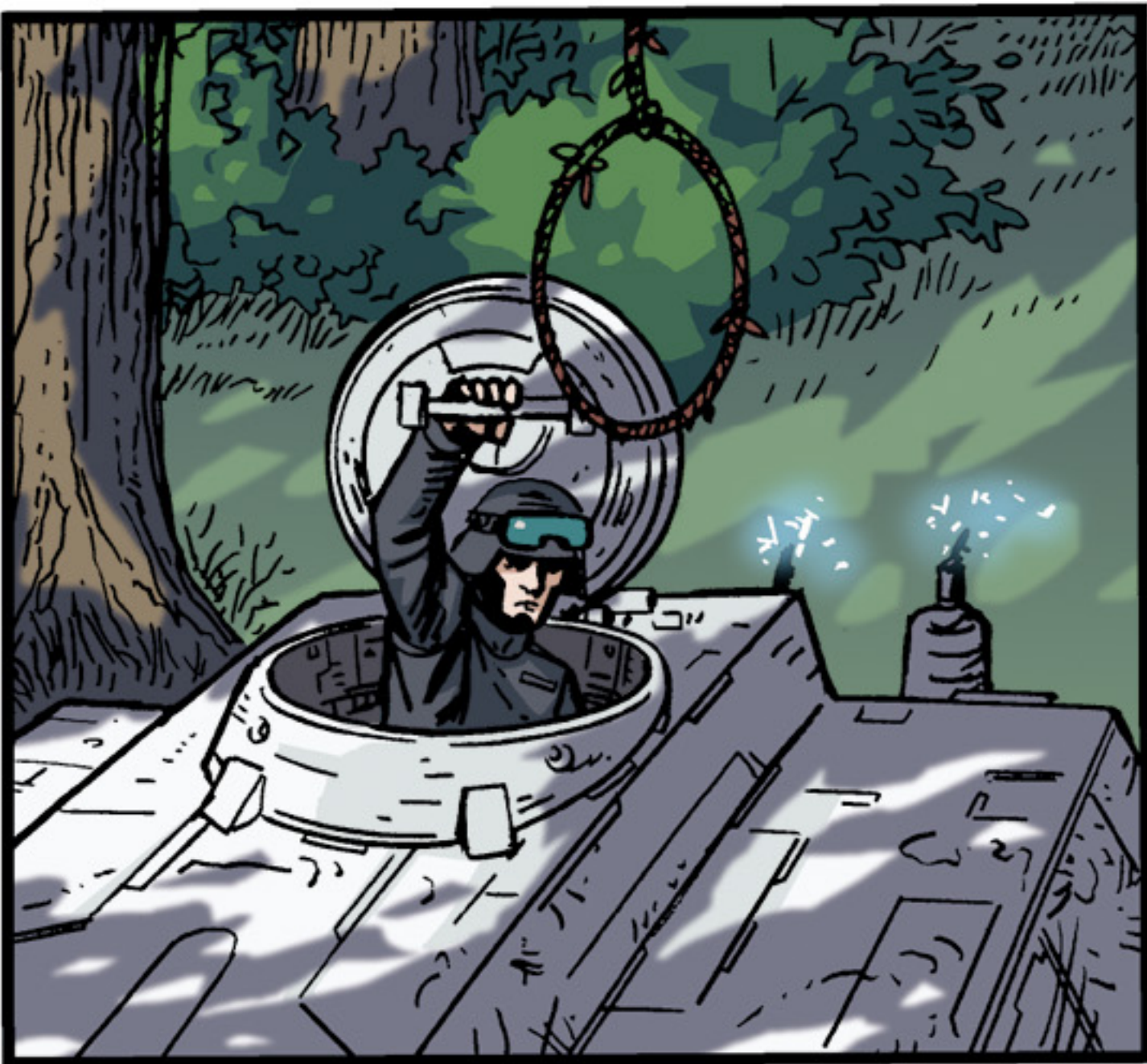


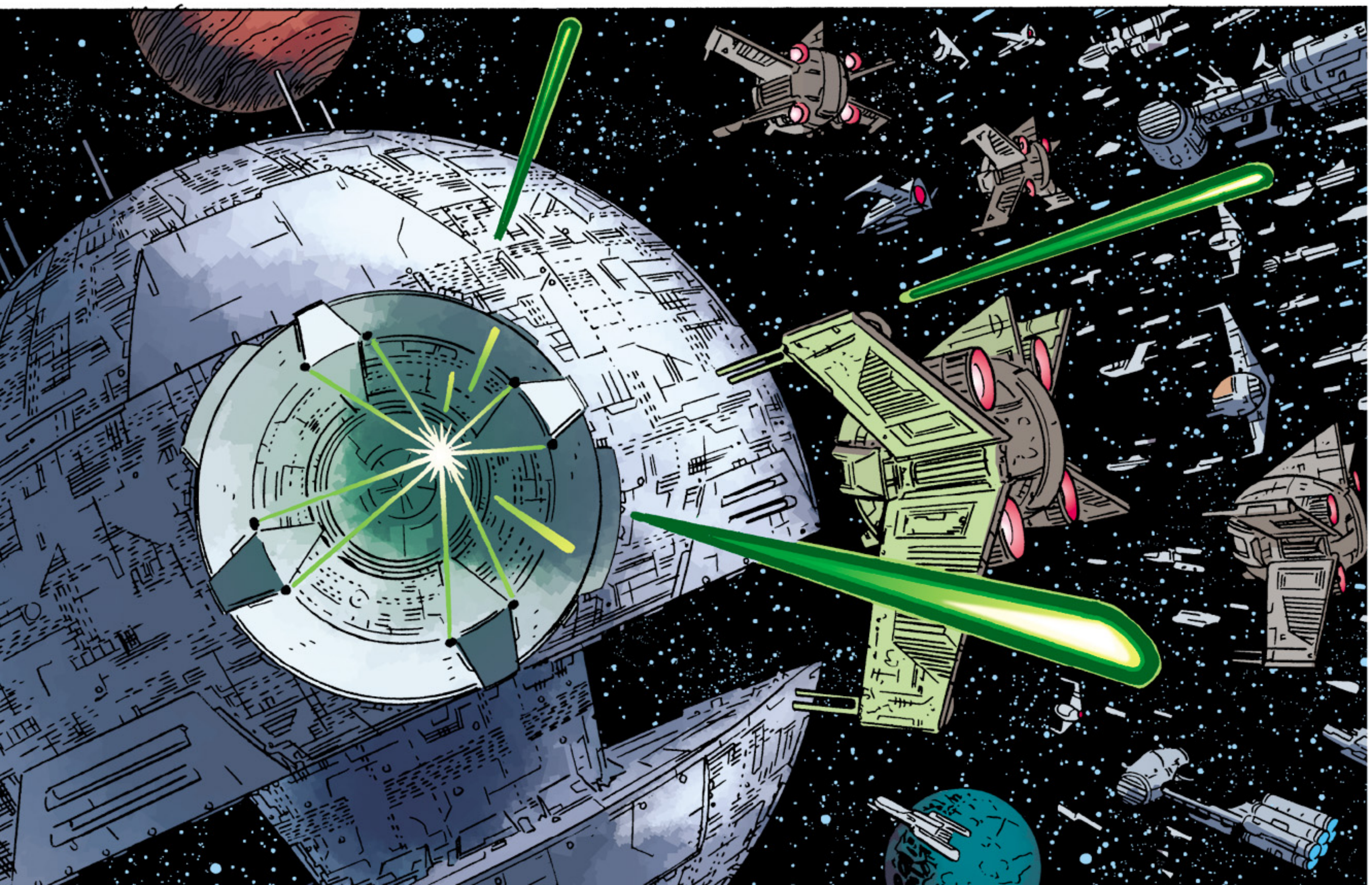
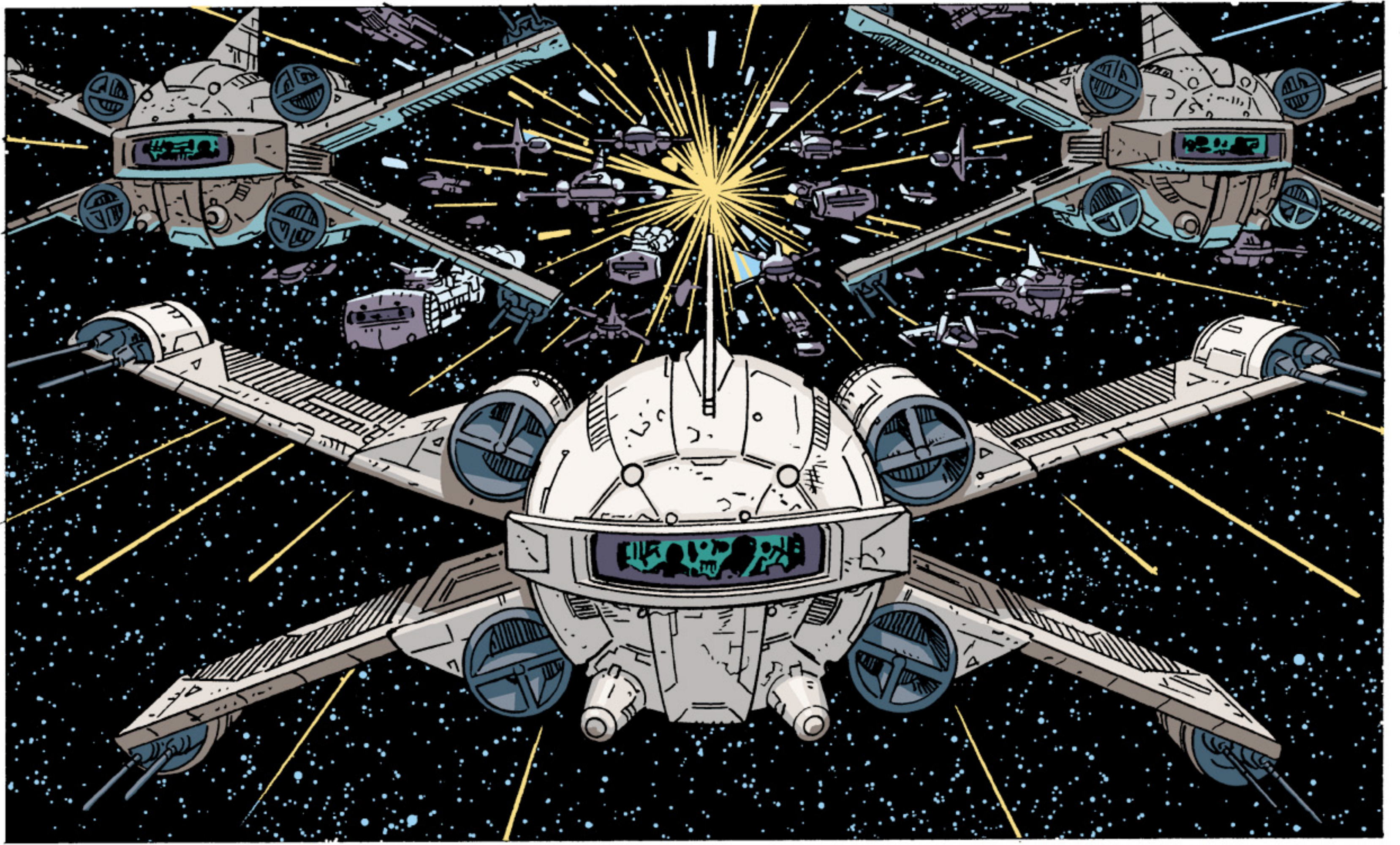






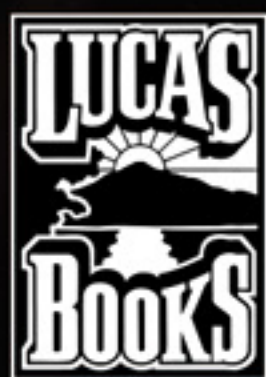








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RINZLER
MAYHEW
BEREDO

BASED ON THE ORIGINAL ROUGH-DRAFT SCREENPLAY BY GEORGE LUCAS

THE

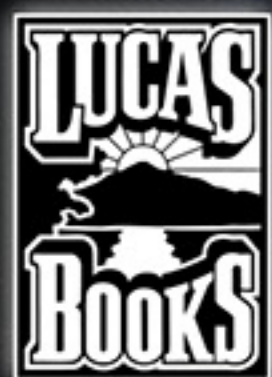
STAR WARS

SAVE THE
PRINCESS—
SAVE THE
GALAXY!

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RINZLER
MAYHEW
BEREDO

THE STAR WARS

BASED ON GEORGE LUCAS'S
ORIGINAL ROUGH-DRAFT SCREENPLAY



Longer ago, in a galaxy even further away

ADAPTED FROM THE ORIGINAL ROUGH-DRAFT SCREENPLAY BY GEORGE LUCAS

THE STAR WARS

Back in 1974—still years before
a film called *Star Wars* would take the world
by storm—George Lucas completed the first rough-draft
screenplay of what was then called *The Star Wars*.

That original screenplay contains all of the now-familiar elements of *Star Wars*—an evil Empire; a young, would-be Jedi; an older Jedi Knight who mentors the boy; a Princess in need of rescue; even a father who is more machine than man—but put together in ways far different from what you've seen on the screen.

For nearly four decades George Lucas's original vision of the galaxy far,
far away existed only as what might have been . . .

SCRIPT
J. W. RINZLER

ART
MIKE MAYHEW

COLORS
RAIN BEREDO

LETTERING
MICHAEL HEISLER

COVER
NICK RUNGE

VARIANT COVERS
JAN DUURSEMA AND DOUGLAS WHEATLEY

DESIGNER
JIMMY PRESLER

ASSISTANT EDITOR
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EDITOR
RANDY STRADLEY

PUBLISHER
MIKE RICHARDSON

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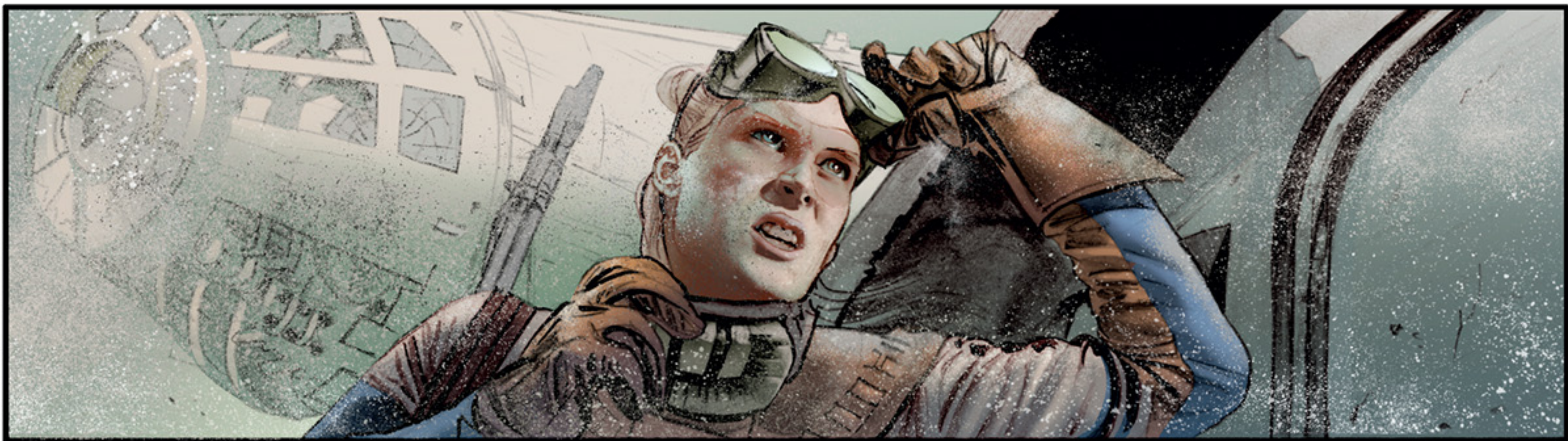
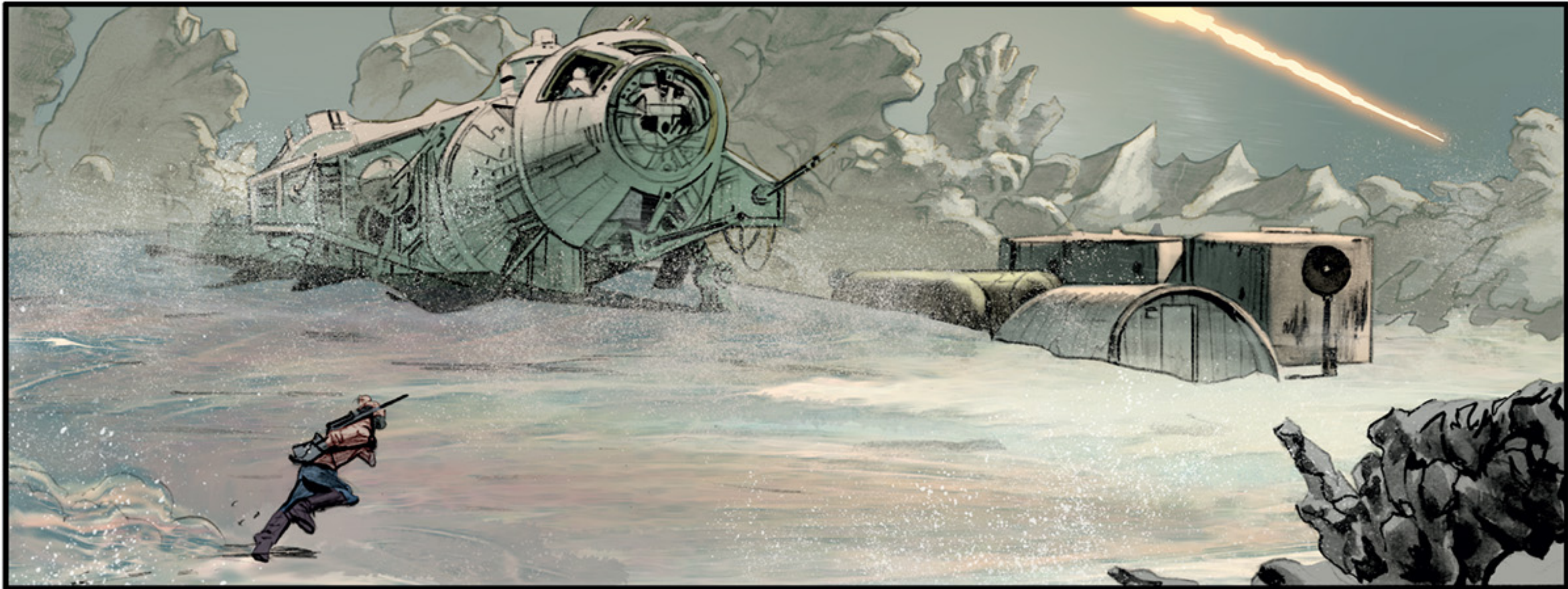
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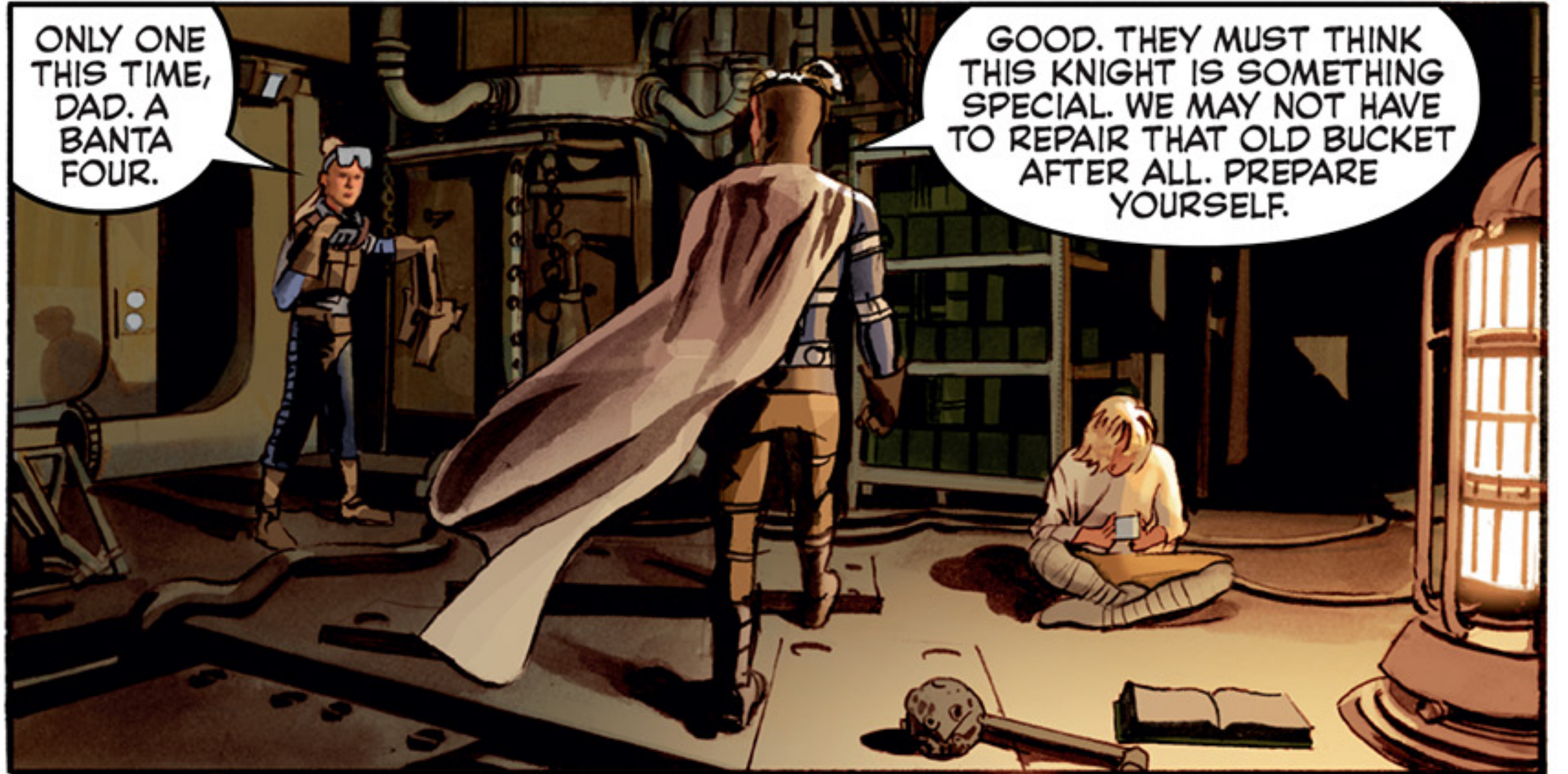
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Until the recent GREAT REBELLION, the JEDI-BENDU were the most feared warriors in the universe. For one hundred thousand years, generations of JEDI perfected their art as the personal bodyguards of the Emperor. They were the chief architects of the invincible IMPERIAL SPACE FORCE, which expanded the EMPIRE across the galaxy, from the celestial equator to the farthest reaches of the GREAT RIFT.

Now these legendary warriors are all but extinct. One by one they have been hunted down and destroyed as enemies of the NEW EMPIRE by a ferocious and sinister rival warrior sect, THE KNIGHTS OF SITH.



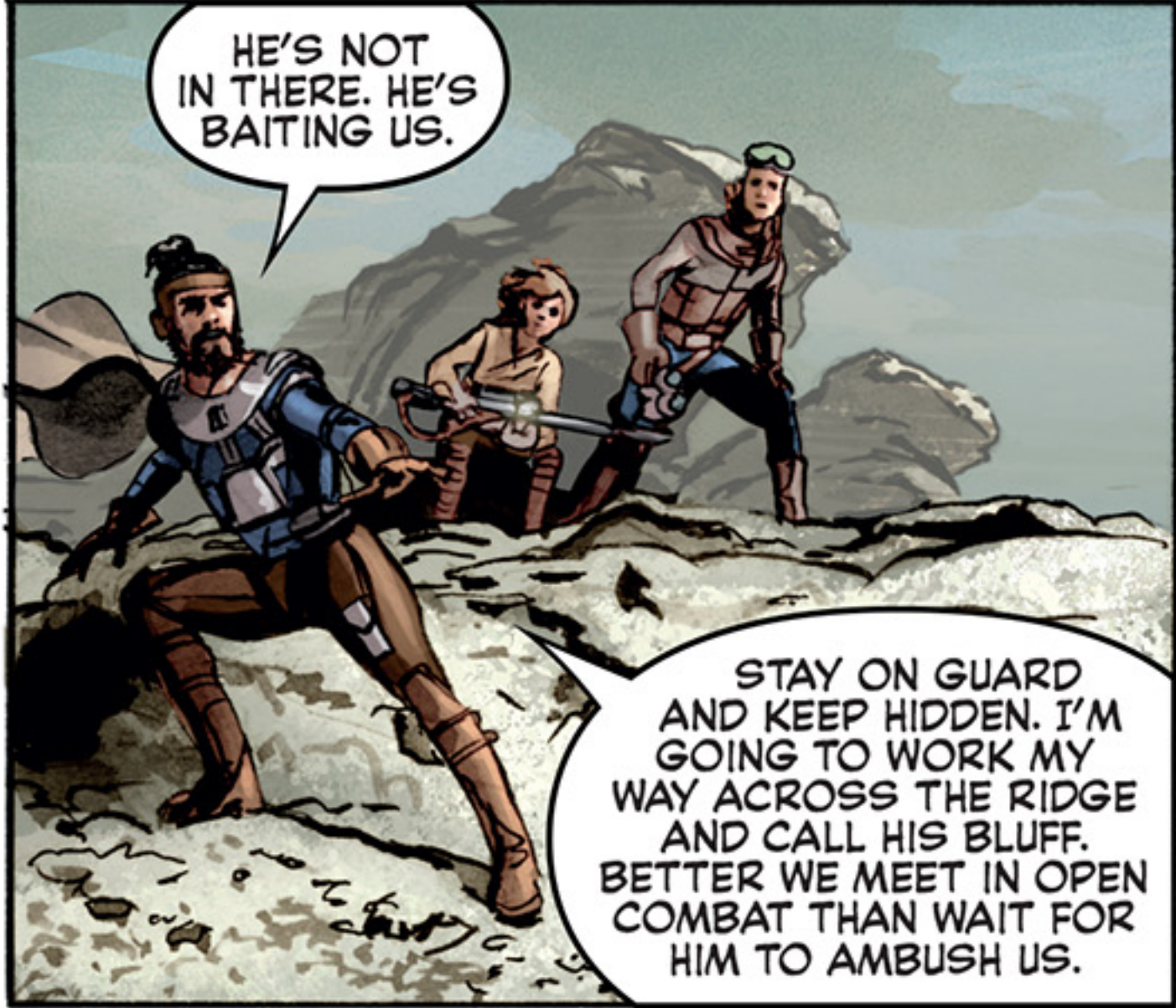






NO TRACKS. BI-LOCK HASN'T BEEN OPENED. INTERIOR SYSTEMS ARE STILL ON...

ARE WE GOING TO WAIT FOR HIM TO COME OUT?



HE'S NOT IN THERE. HE'S BAITING US.

STAY ON GUARD AND KEEP HIDDEN. I'M GOING TO WORK MY WAY ACROSS THE RIDGE AND CALL HIS BLUFF. BETTER WE MEET IN OPEN COMBAT THAN WAIT FOR HIM TO AMBUSH US.



HE SHOULD HAVE LET ME GO WITH HIM. HE'S GETTING TOO OLD TO MAKE AN OPEN CHALLENGE.

HE'S NOT TOO OLD TO REALIZE YOU'D JUST GET IN THE WAY.



COVER THAT WEAPON. IT SHINES LIKE A BEACON.

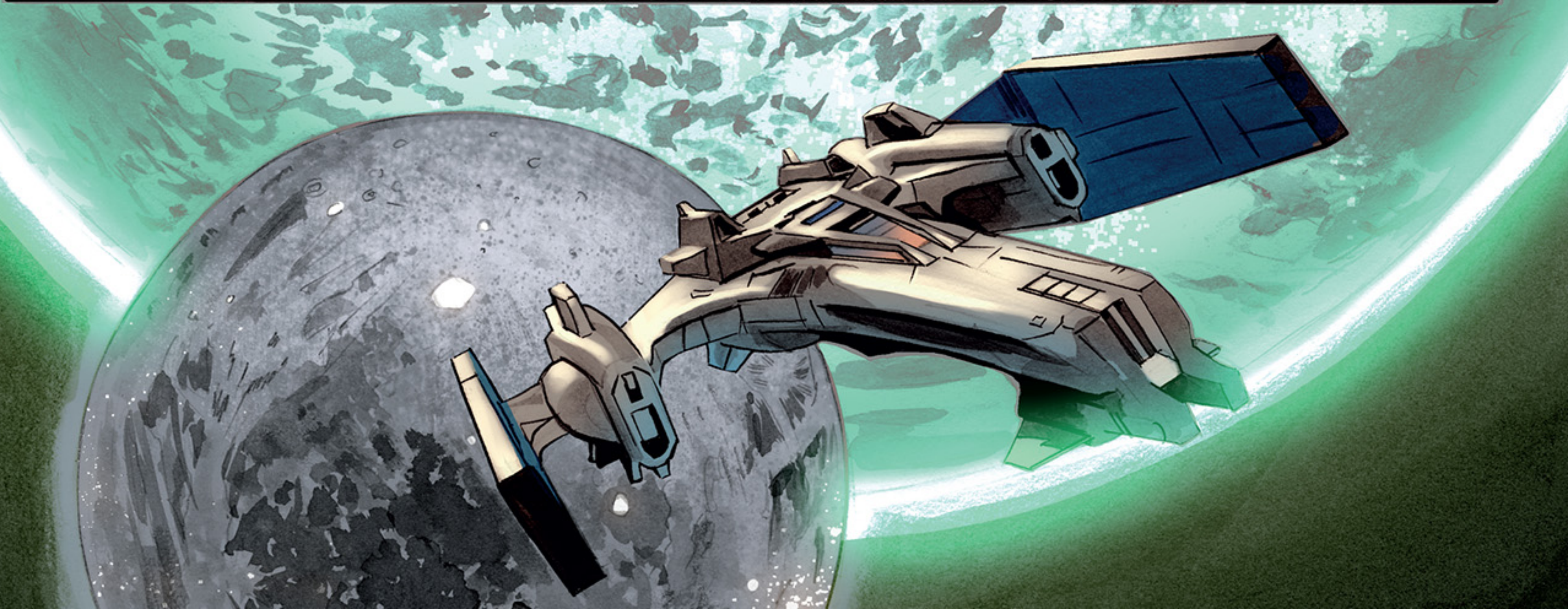
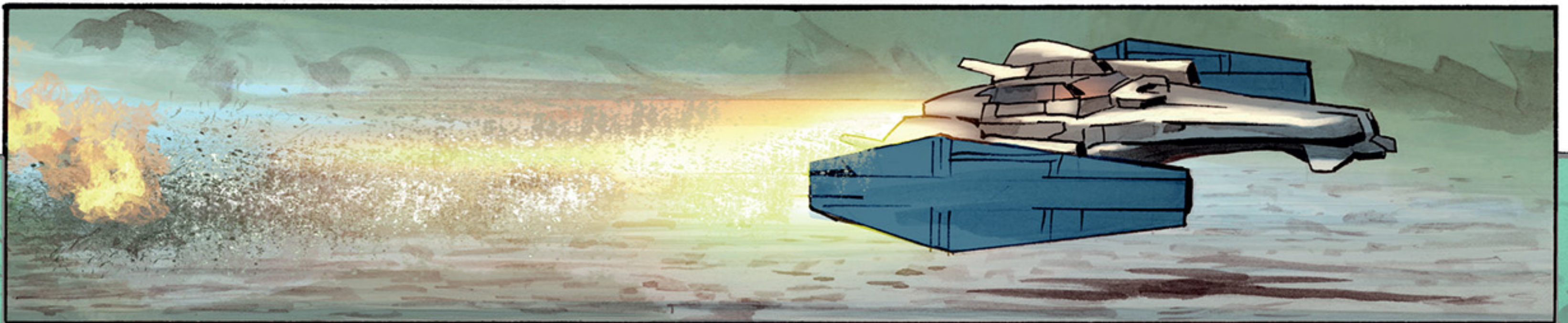
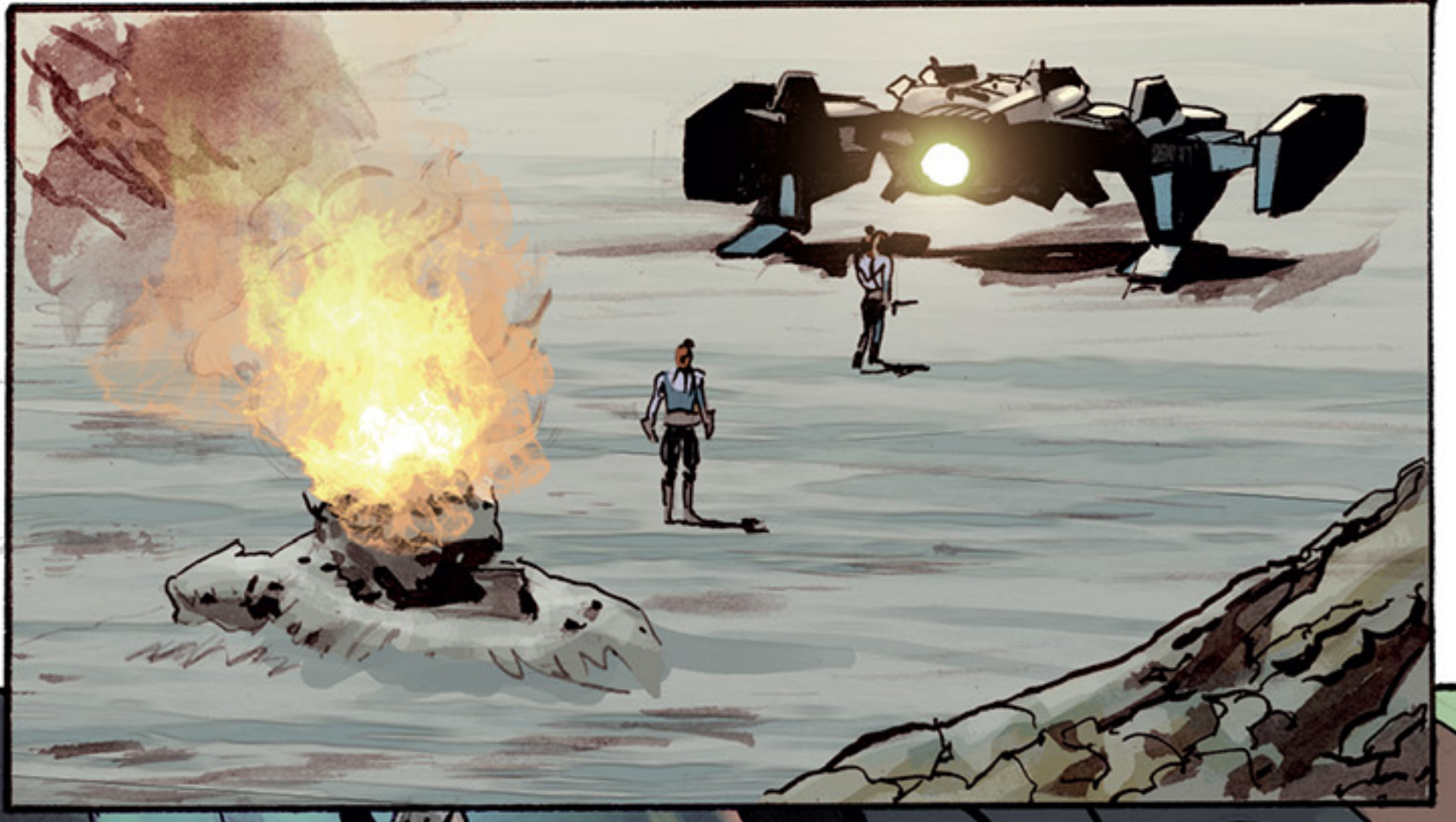
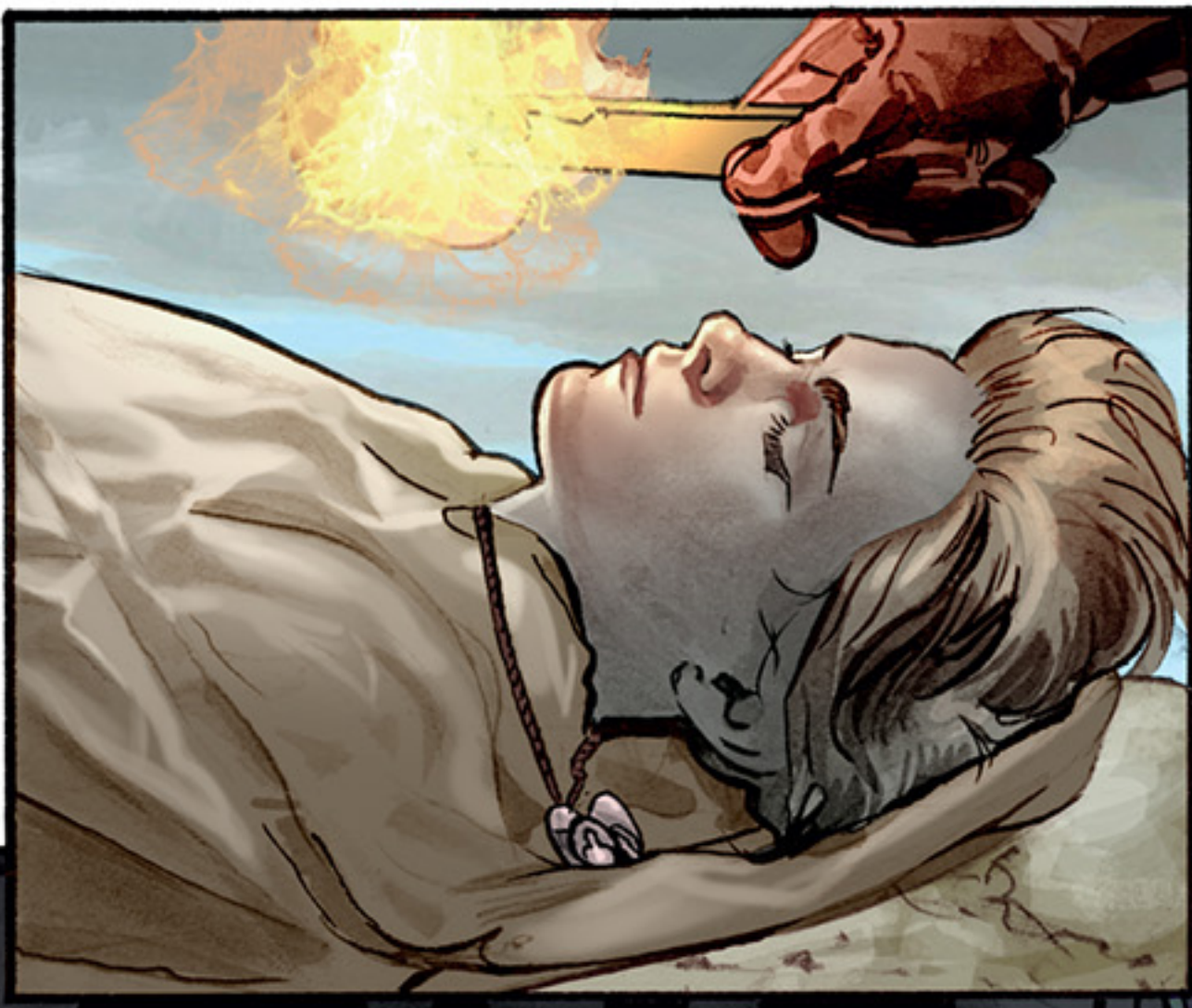
HE'S MAKING HIS MOVE...







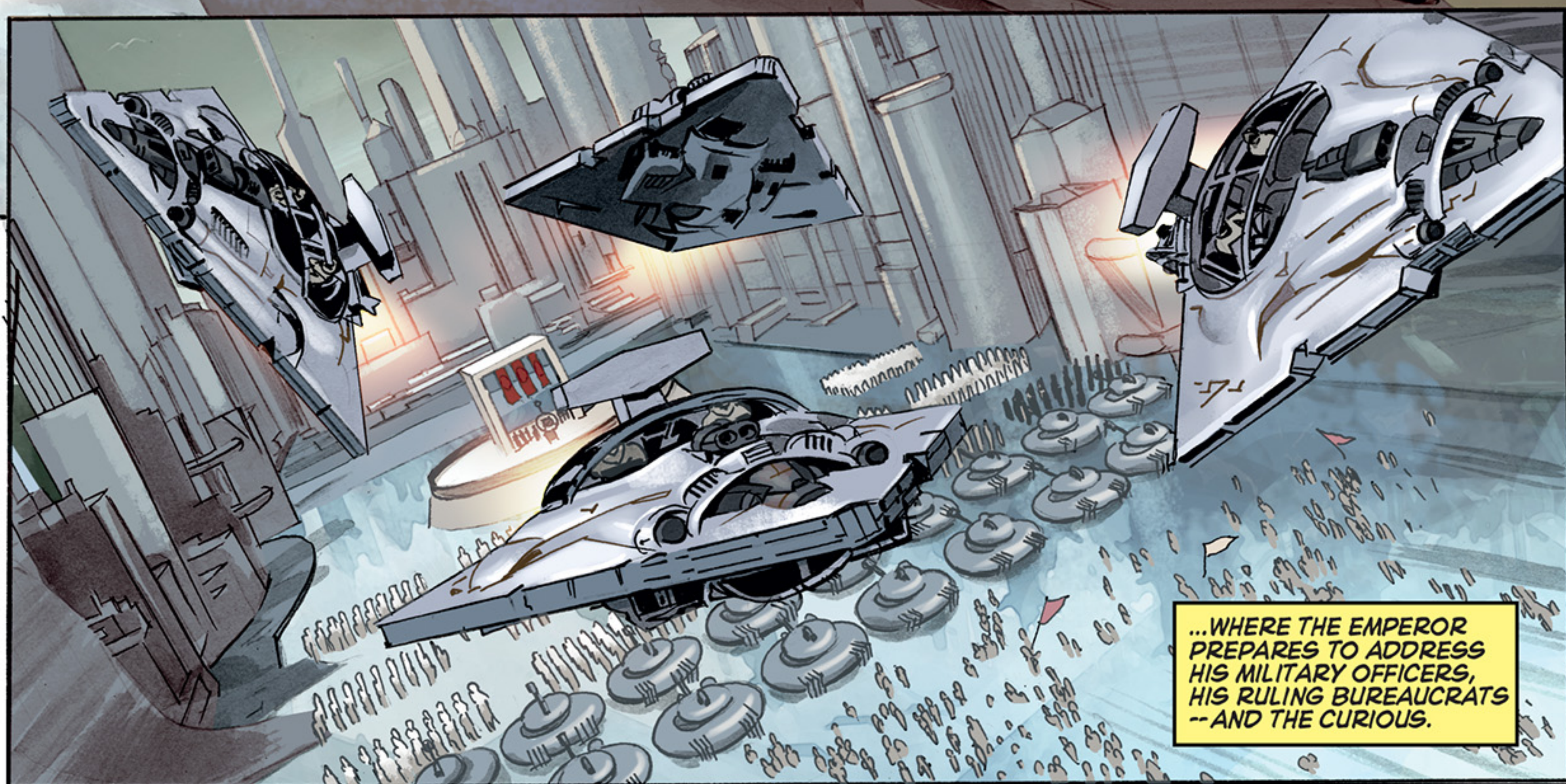




ALDERAAN, CAPITAL OF THE
NEW GALACTIC EMPIRE.

ALL
RIGHT, BOYS,
LET'S IMPRESS OUR
EMPEROR. SUPERIORS,
BREAK LEFT AND
ROLL!

IMPERIAL STARDESTROYERS
SCREAM OVER THE PLAZA
OF THE DADERS...



...WHERE THE EMPEROR
PREPARES TO ADDRESS
HIS MILITARY OFFICERS,
HIS RULING BUREAUCRATS
-- AND THE CURIOUS.

THE CROWD
HAS BEEN HERE
SINCE MORNING,
YOUR HIGHNESS.
THEY ANXIOUSLY
AWAIT YOUR
WORDS.

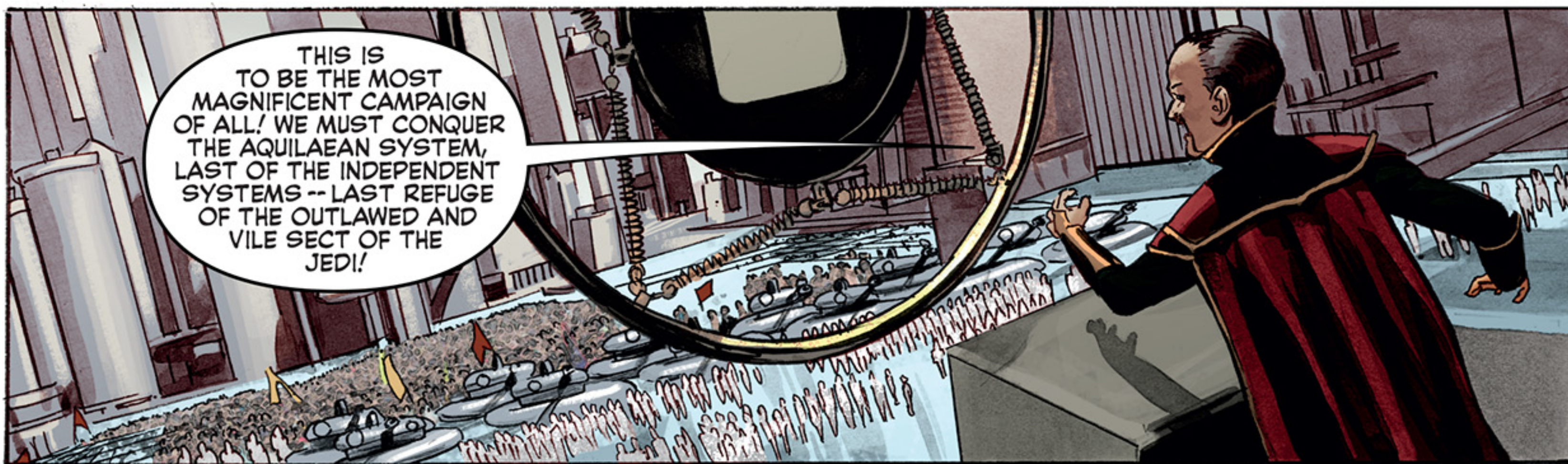
DO NOT FRET, GOVERNOR
HOEDAACK. MY WORDS --
MY WORDS! -- WILL FILL
THEM WITH DIVINE
PURPOSE.

AND DON'T
WORRY, I HAVEN'T
FORGOTTEN ABOUT
YOUR...PROMOTION.

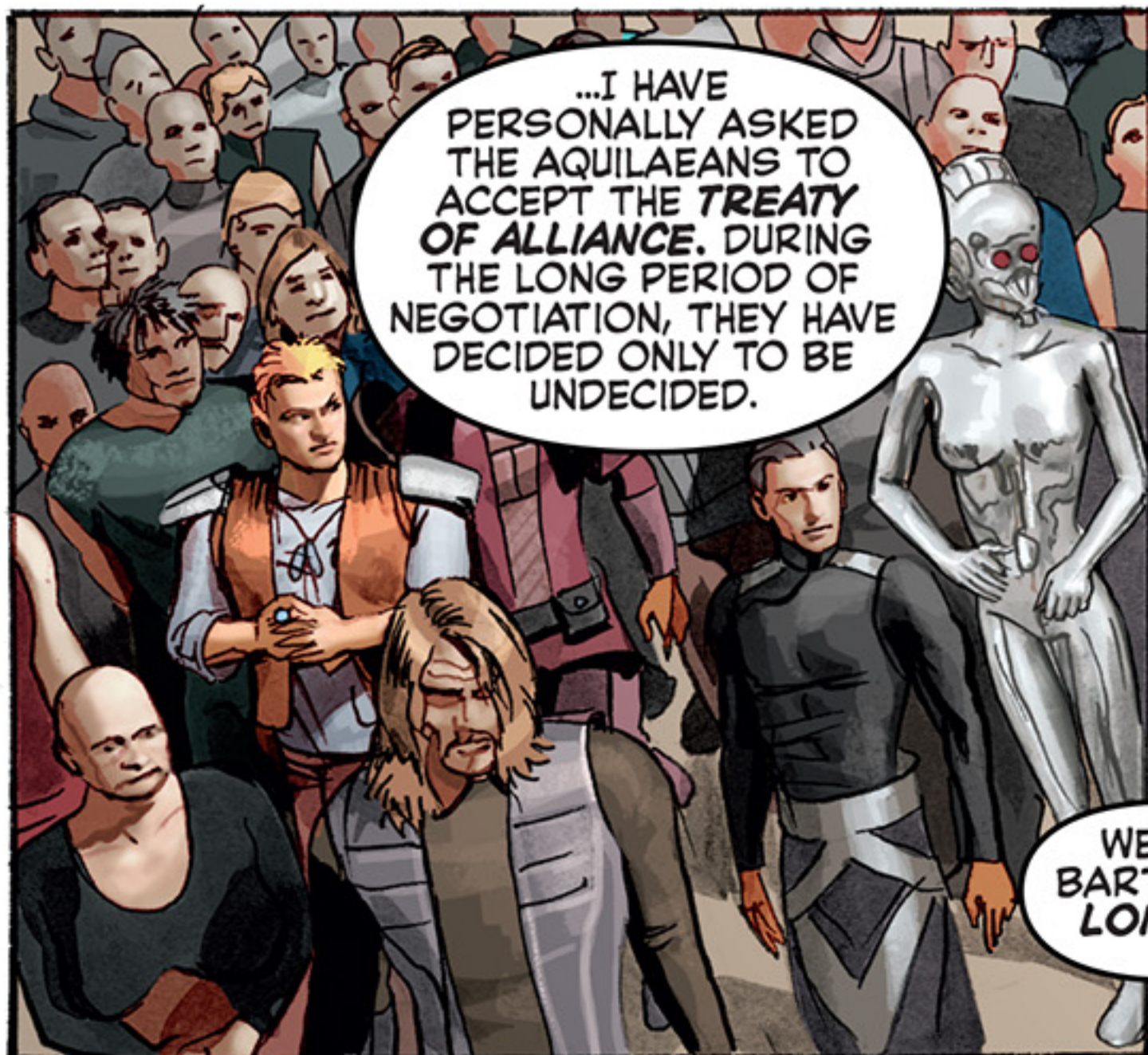


UPON THIS BATTLE DEPENDS THE SURVIVAL OF THE GALACTIC EMPIRE...UPON THIS BATTLE DEPENDS THE LIFE AND LONG CONTINUITY OF OUR CIVILIZATION...

...NOT SINCE THE GREAT JEDI REBELLION HAS OUR DESTINY BEEN PLACED IN SUCH A BALANCE.



THIS IS TO BE THE MOST MAGNIFICENT CAMPAIGN OF ALL! WE MUST CONQUER THE AQUILAEAN SYSTEM, LAST OF THE INDEPENDENT SYSTEMS -- LAST REFUGE OF THE OUTLAWED AND VILE SECT OF THE JEDI!



...I HAVE PERSONALLY ASKED THE AQUILAEANS TO ACCEPT THE **TREATY OF ALLIANCE**. DURING THE LONG PERIOD OF NEGOTIATION, THEY HAVE DECIDED ONLY TO BE UNDECIDED.

WE WILL BARTER NO LONGER.



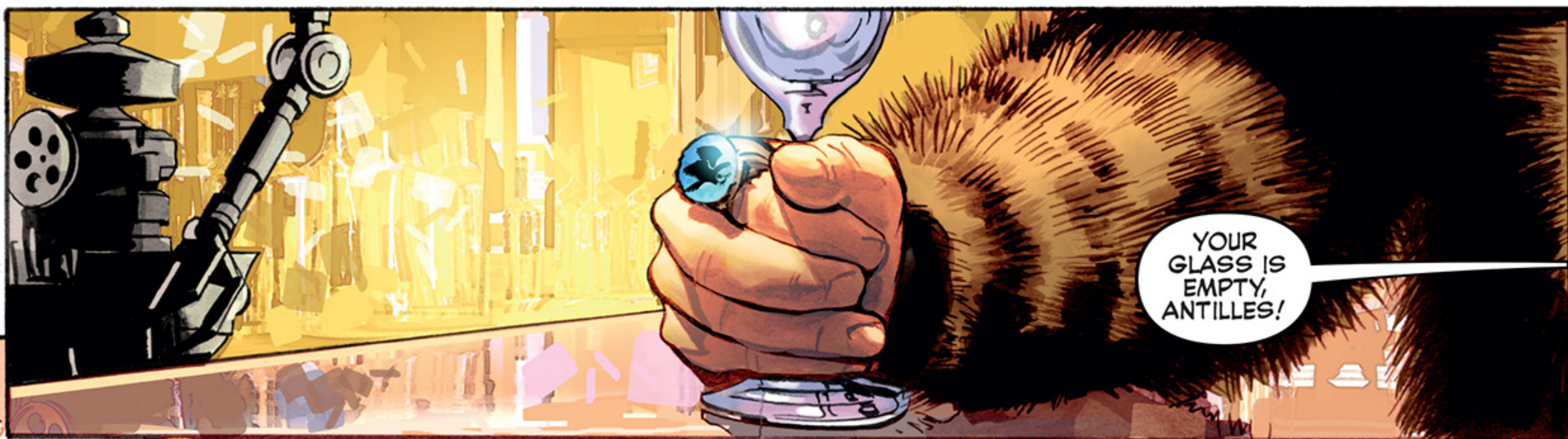
I HAVE APPOINTED GOVERNOR HOEDAACK AS FIRST LORD OF THE AQUILAEAN SYSTEM AND SURROUNDING TERRITORIES. THIS IS THE LAST FRONTIER AND THE FINAL STONE IN THE GREAT WALL OF THE GALACTIC EMPIRE.

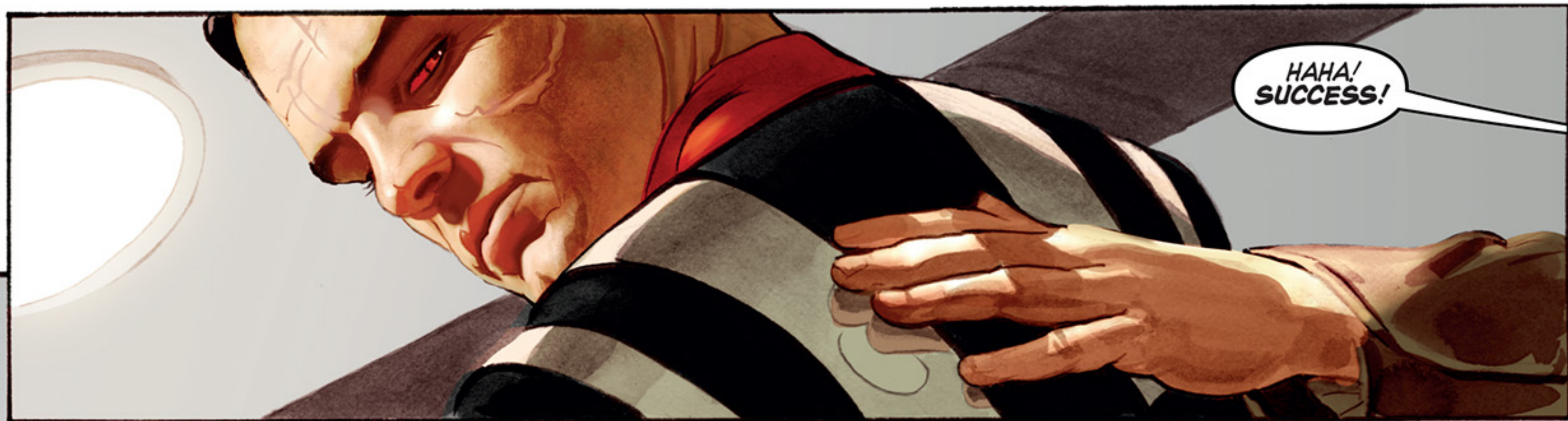


LONG LIVE THE EMPEROR!

DEATH TO THE JEDI!







HAHA!
SUCCESS!



MY DEAR
DARTH VADER
-- YOU SHOULD
REJOICE!

WE ARE NO
LONGER UNDER
THE CONTROL
OF THE GREAT
FAMILIES.



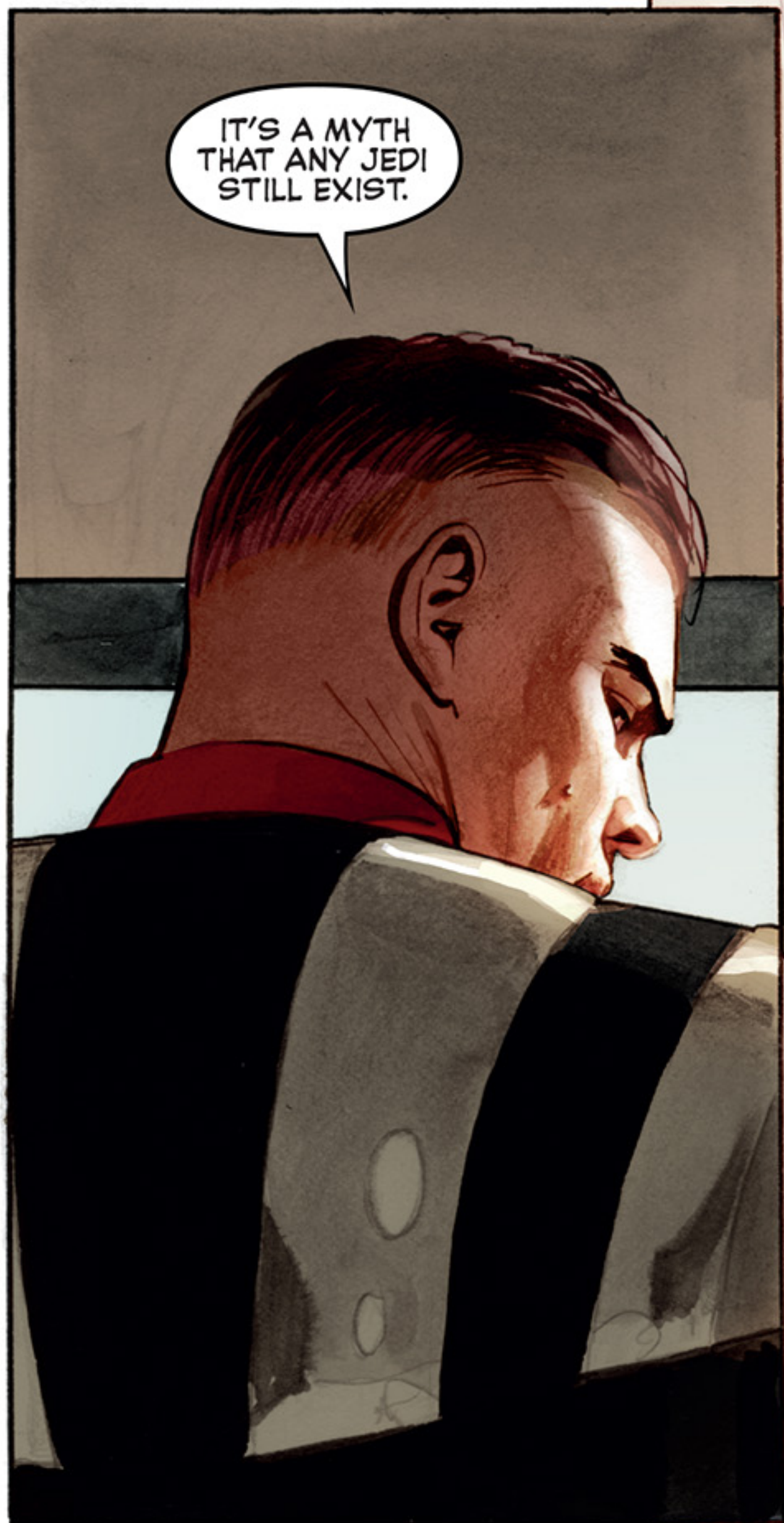
YOU STILL
HAVE A SYSTEM
TO CONQUER,
GOVERNOR
HEDOAACK.

BUT
THIS SYSTEM
WILL BRING US
MORE SCIENTIFIC
WEALTH THAN ANY
OTHER HOUSE IN
THE TRIBUNAL.

WE WILL
EASILY GAIN
CONTROL OF THE
DIRECTORSHIP.



DON'T
UNDERESTIMATE
THE ARMIES OF
AQUILAE. THEY ARE
LED BY A *JEDI*.



IT'S A MYTH
THAT ANY JEDI
STILL EXIST.



GENERAL,
I'VE TOLD YOU
ABOUT OUR SUPREME
TRIBUNAL MEMBER **VANTOS**
COLL. HE WORRIES A LOT
ABOUT LEGENDS AND
MYTHS.



GENERAL
SKYWALKER IS
NO MYTH.

WHEN I
FIRST ARRIVED
AT COURT, HE WAS
FIRST BODYGUARD
TO THE EMPEROR!
IT WAS **HE** WHO
LED THE JEDI
REBELLION.



SEIG
DARKLIGHTER
LED THE
REBELLION.

SO
THE EMPEROR
WOULD HAVE YOU
BELIEVE. BUT **I**
WAS **THERE.**



THEN WHY
WASN'T HE
HUNTED DOWN
LIKE THE
OTHERS?

BECAUSE
HE'S TOO
CLEVER.



HE'S THERE, ALL RIGHT...
I CAN SENSE IT. MARK
MY WORDS -- **AQUILAE**
WILL NOT EASILY BE
CONQUERED.

THE PALACE OF LITE, ON THE PLANET AQUILAE, HOME OF KING KAYOS AND QUEEN BREHA -- AND THE TARGET OF THE EMPEROR'S SINISTER PLANS.

IF THERE WERE TO BE WAR, ZAVOS, WOULD YOUR FRIGATES STILL SUPPLY US?

THE KING PRESIDES AT A MEETING OF THE AQUILAEAN COUNCIL.

MY LORD, KING KAYOS, THE CHROME COMPANIES ARE WITH YOU IN SPIRIT, BUT YOU MUST UNDERSTAND--

-- THEY CAN'T OPENLY SUPPORT YOU. IMPERIAL TRADE RESTRICTIONS ARE VERY UNFAVORABLE.

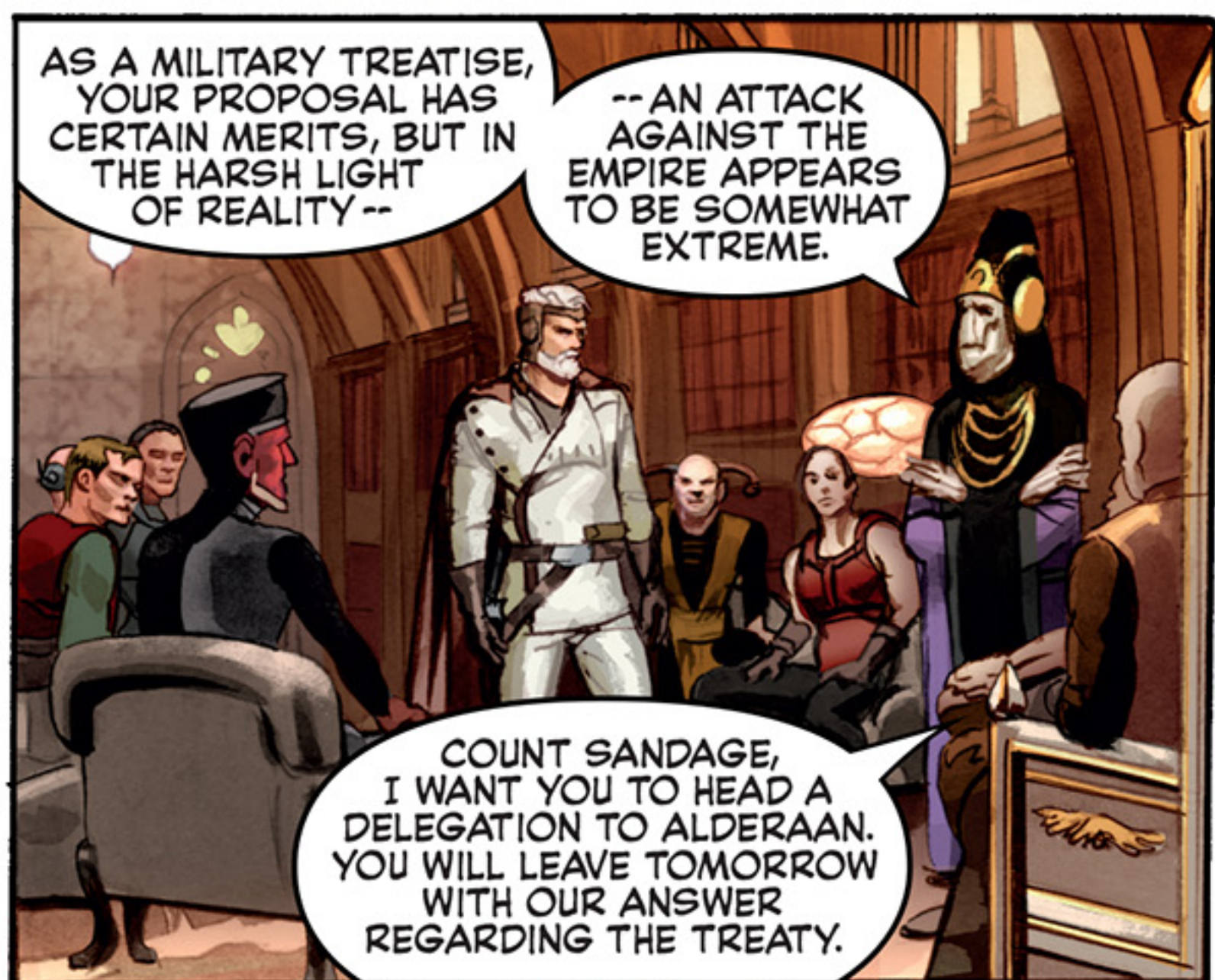
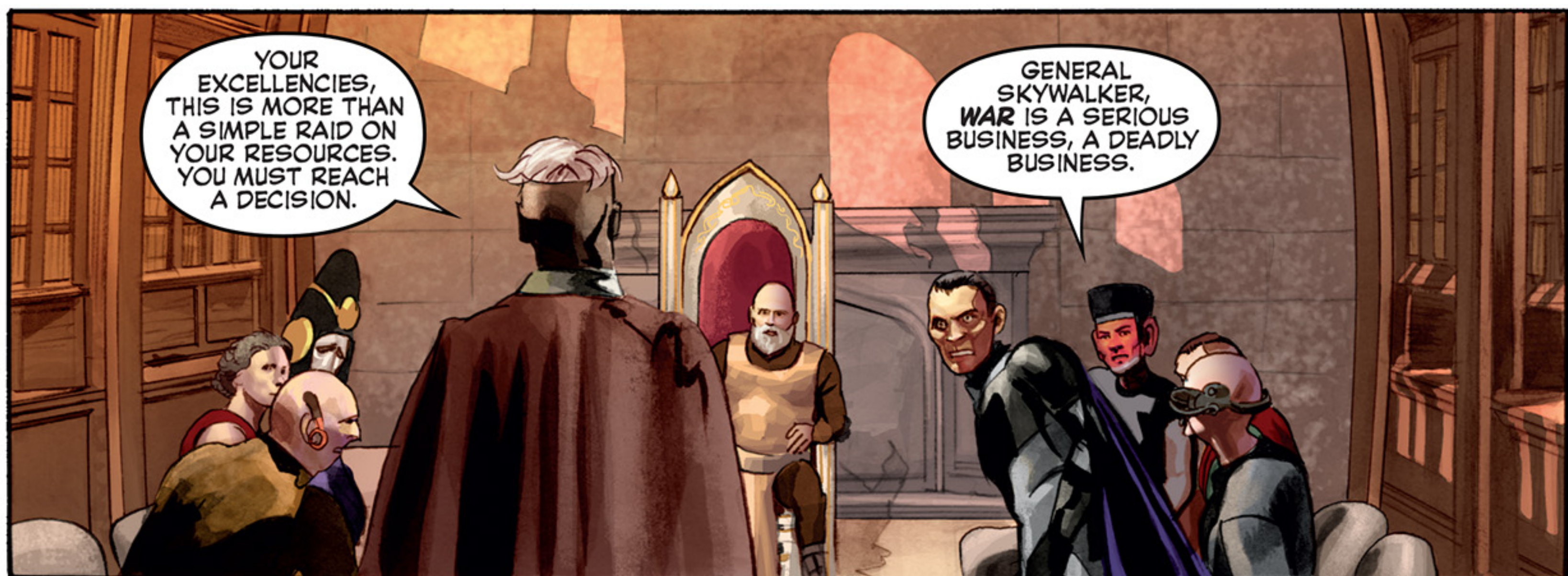


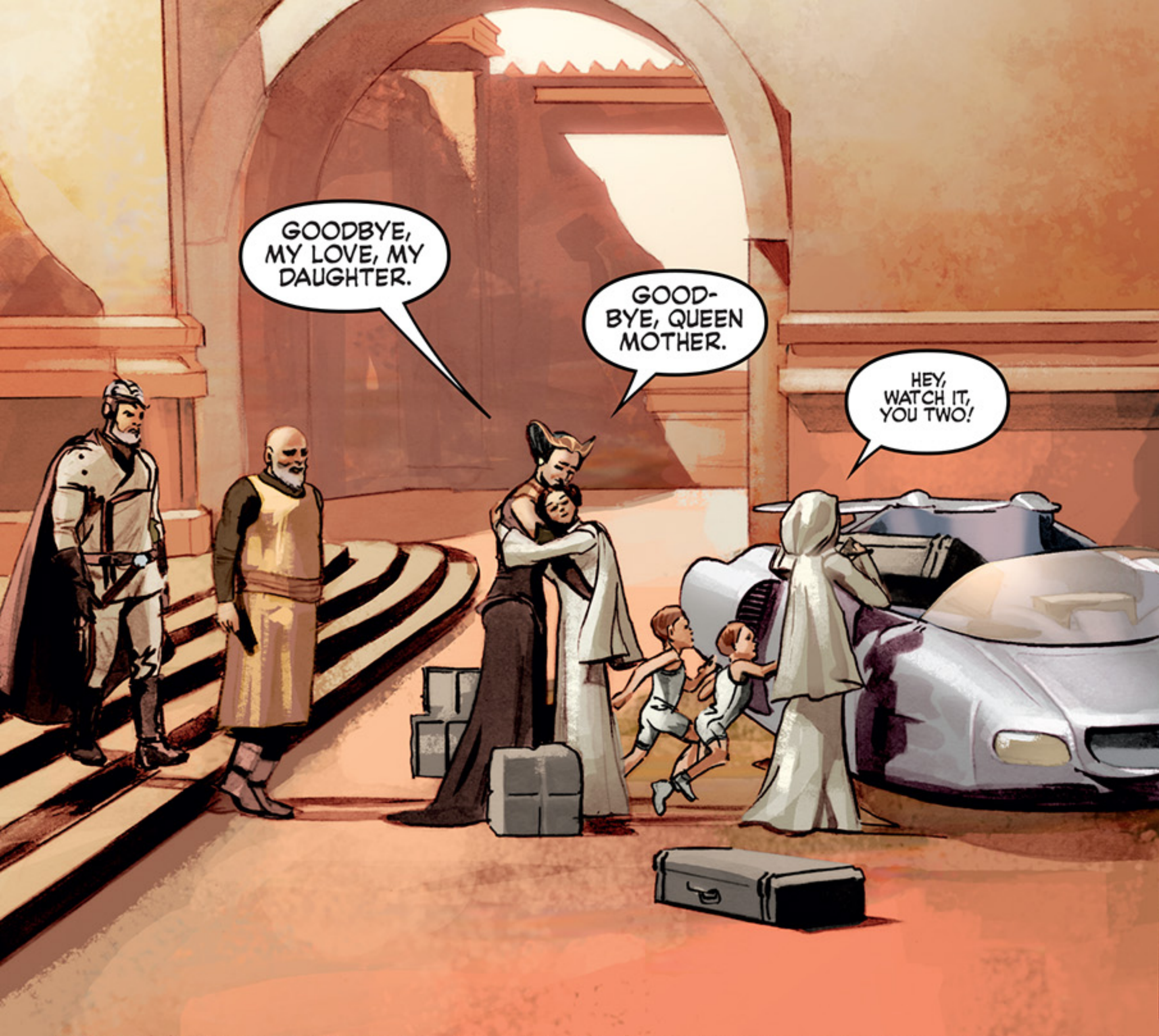
YOU'RE
WASTING TIME!
WE MUST APPROVE
THE TREATY. IF THERE
IS WAR, THE EMPEROR
WILL DESTROY OUR
ENTIRE SYSTEM WITH
A SNAP OF HIS
FINGERS.

**GENERAL
SKYWALKER** IS
A DREAMER IF HE
THINKS HE CAN MOUNT
ANY MEANINGFUL
RESISTANCE. YOU'RE
ALL DREAMERS
IF --



COUNT
SANDAGE, **SIT
DOWN.**

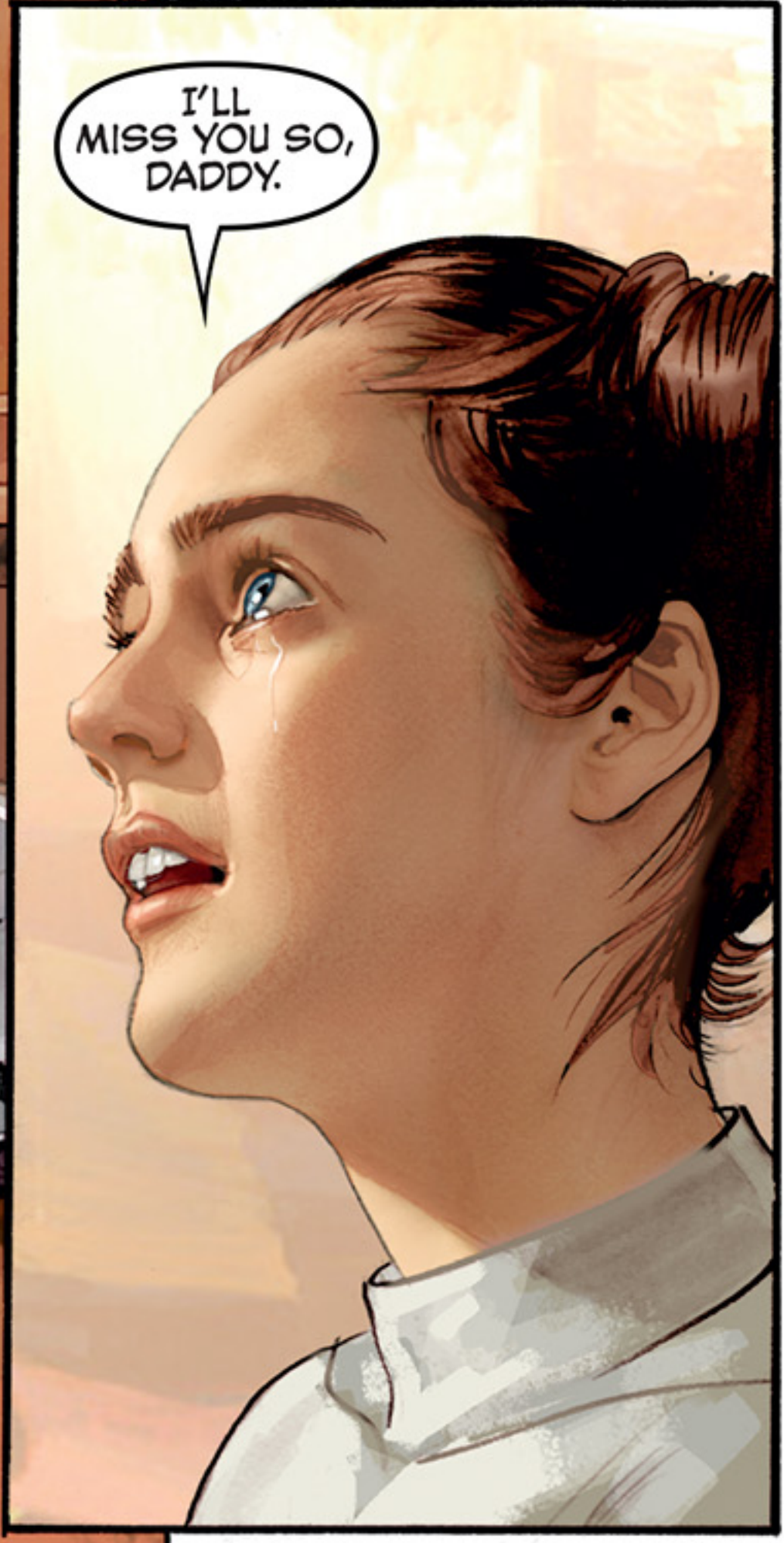




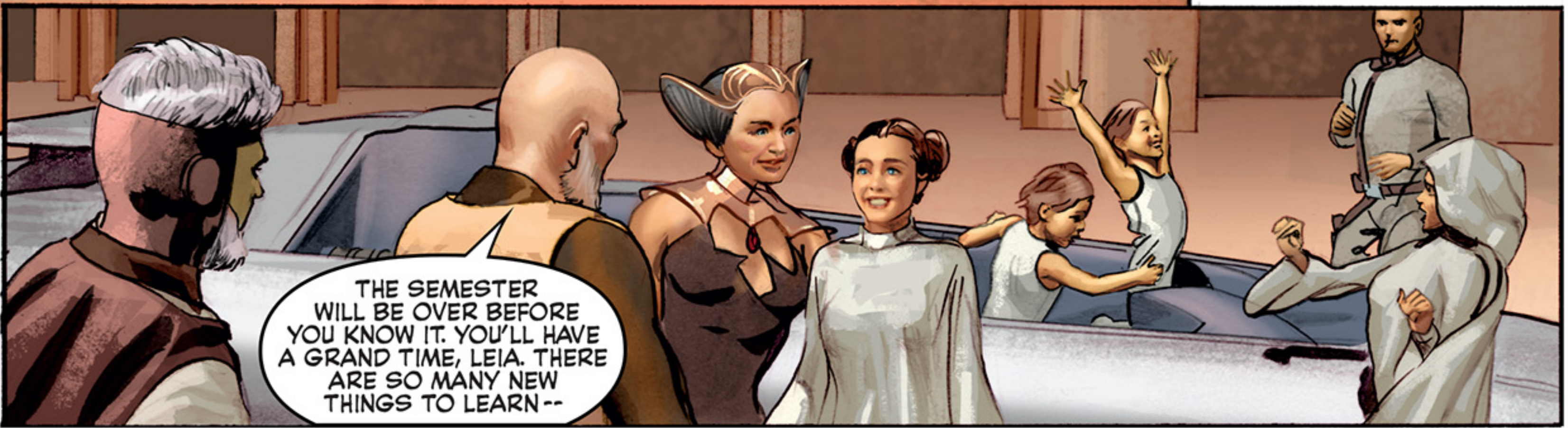
GOODBYE,
MY LOVE, MY
DAUGHTER.

GOOD-
BYE, QUEEN
MOTHER.

HEY,
WATCH IT,
YOU TWO!



I'LL
MISS YOU SO,
DADDY.



THE SEMESTER
WILL BE OVER BEFORE
YOU KNOW IT. YOU'LL HAVE
A GRAND TIME, LEIA. THERE
ARE SO MANY NEW
THINGS TO LEARN--

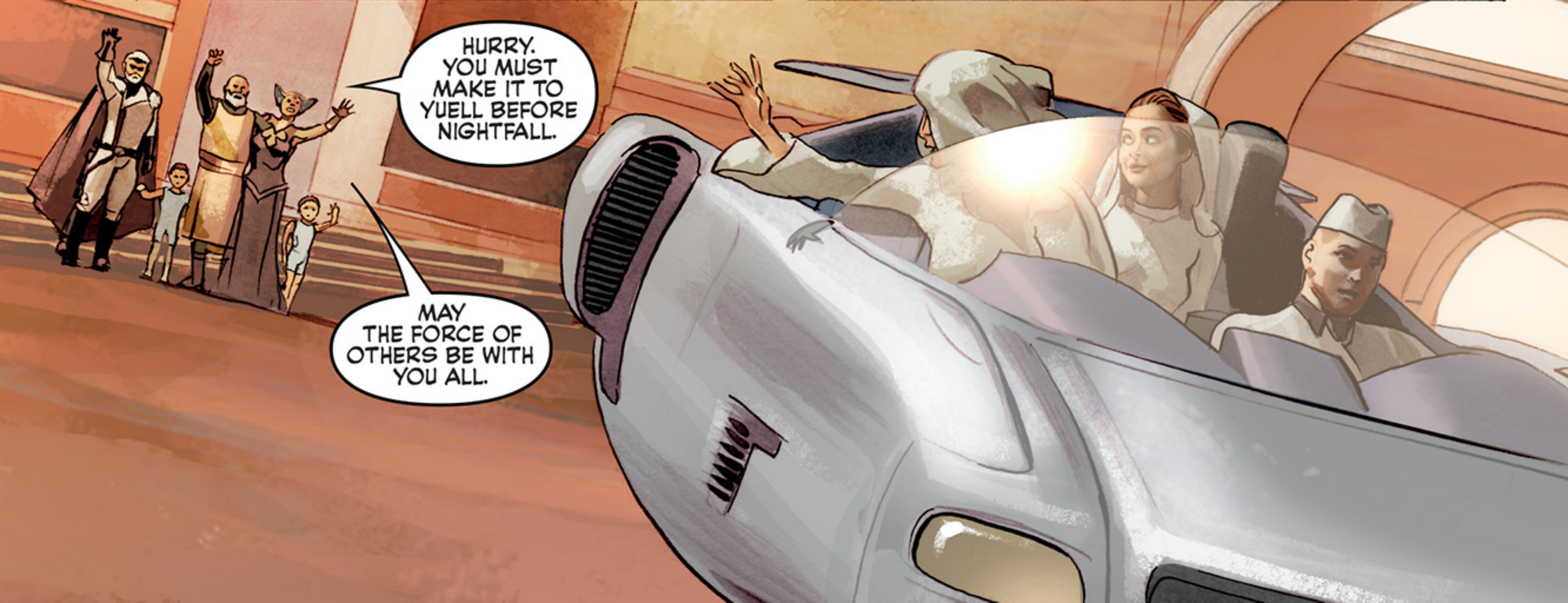


-- I WISH
I WERE
GOING.



MAY YOUR
STUDIES DO
YOU HONOR,
PRINCESS
LEIA.

THANK
YOU, GENERAL
SKYWALKER.



HURRY.
YOU MUST
MAKE IT TO
YUELL BEFORE
NIGHTFALL.

MAY
THE FORCE OF
OTHERS BE WITH
YOU ALL.

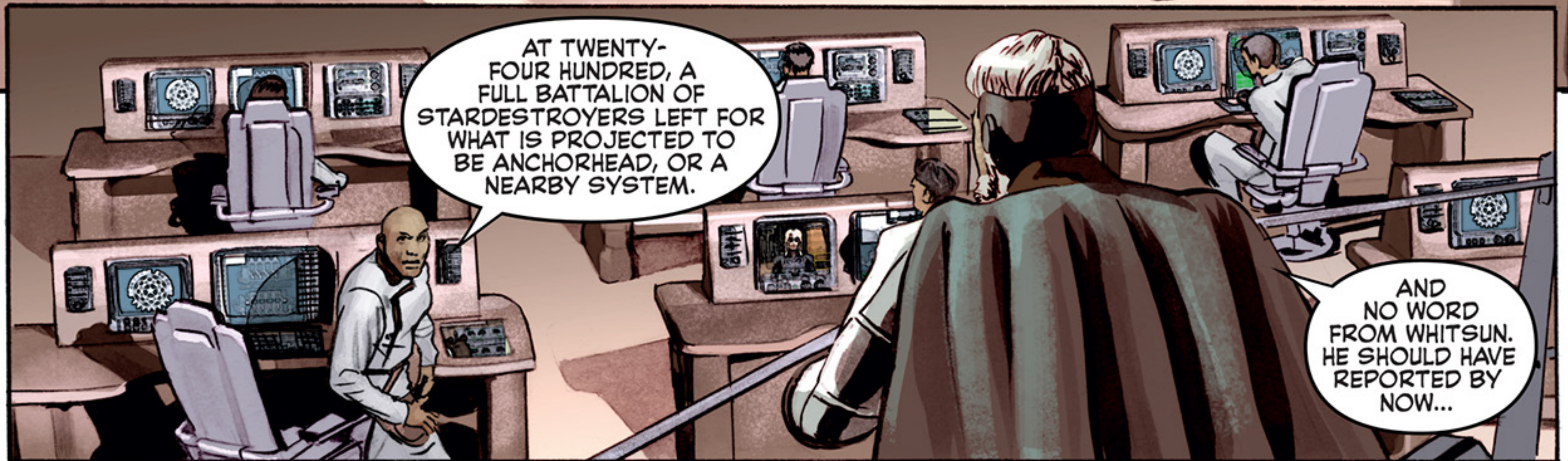
KJKAEKJPAKJNEPA
ENTRANCE

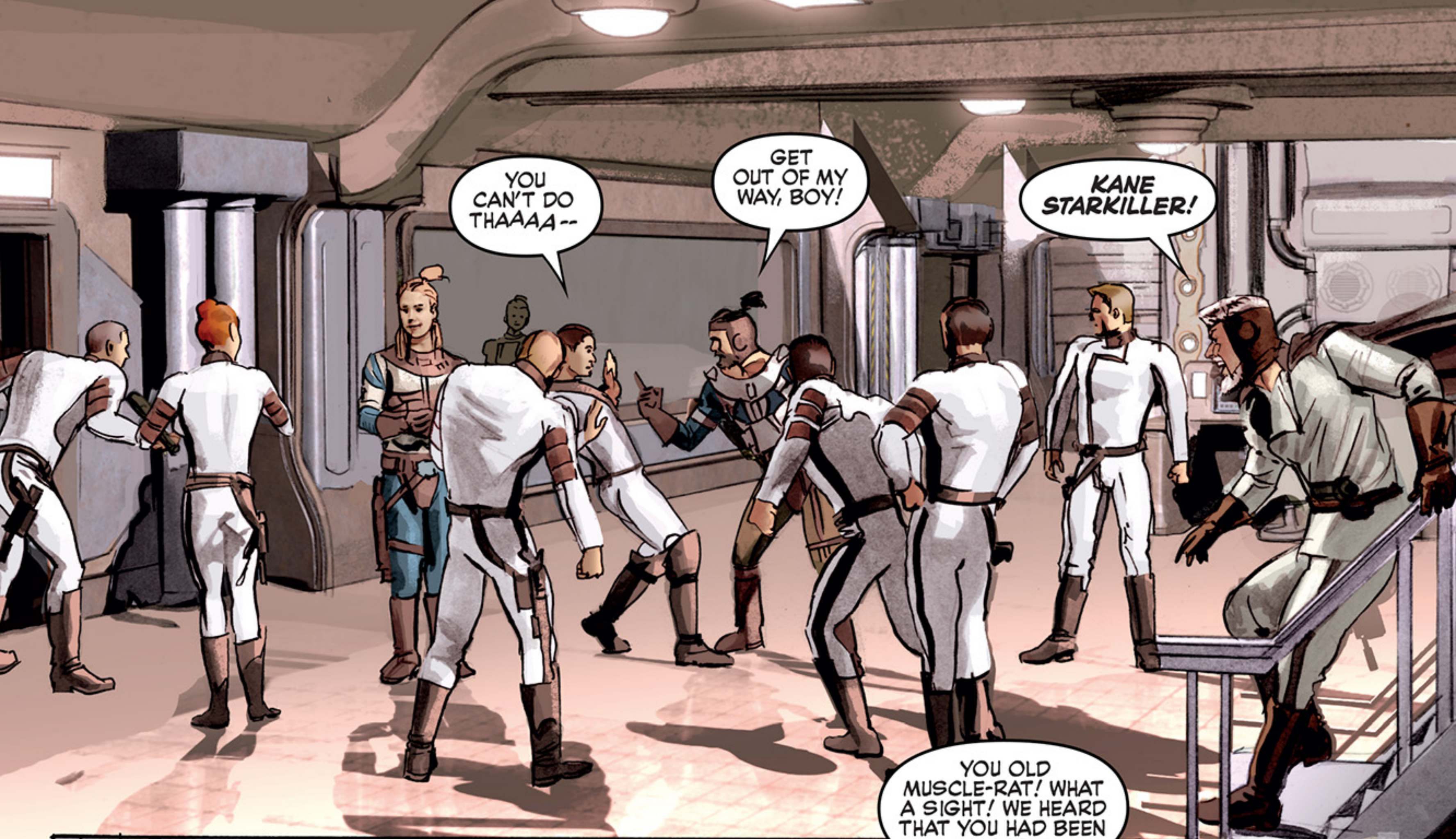
AQUILAE. THE WAR ROOM
OF THE HIDDEN UNDERGROUND
FORTRESS -- FAR BENEATH
THE PALACE OF LITE.

KJKKJNS7KJN
887773

MONTROSS!

HAVE
ANY SHIPS
LEFT THE
PLANET?





YOU
CAN'T DO
THAAAA--

GET
OUT OF MY
WAY, BOY!

KANE
STARKILLER!

YOU OLD
MUSCLE-RAT! WHAT
A SIGHT! WE HEARD
THAT YOU HAD BEEN
EXECUTED.



SO THE EMPIRE WOULD
LIKE TO BELIEVE. I'VE BEEN IN
THE KESSIL SYSTEM. WHERE HAVE
YOU BEEN, SKYWALKER -- CLEANING
UP OTHER PEOPLE'S MESSSES?

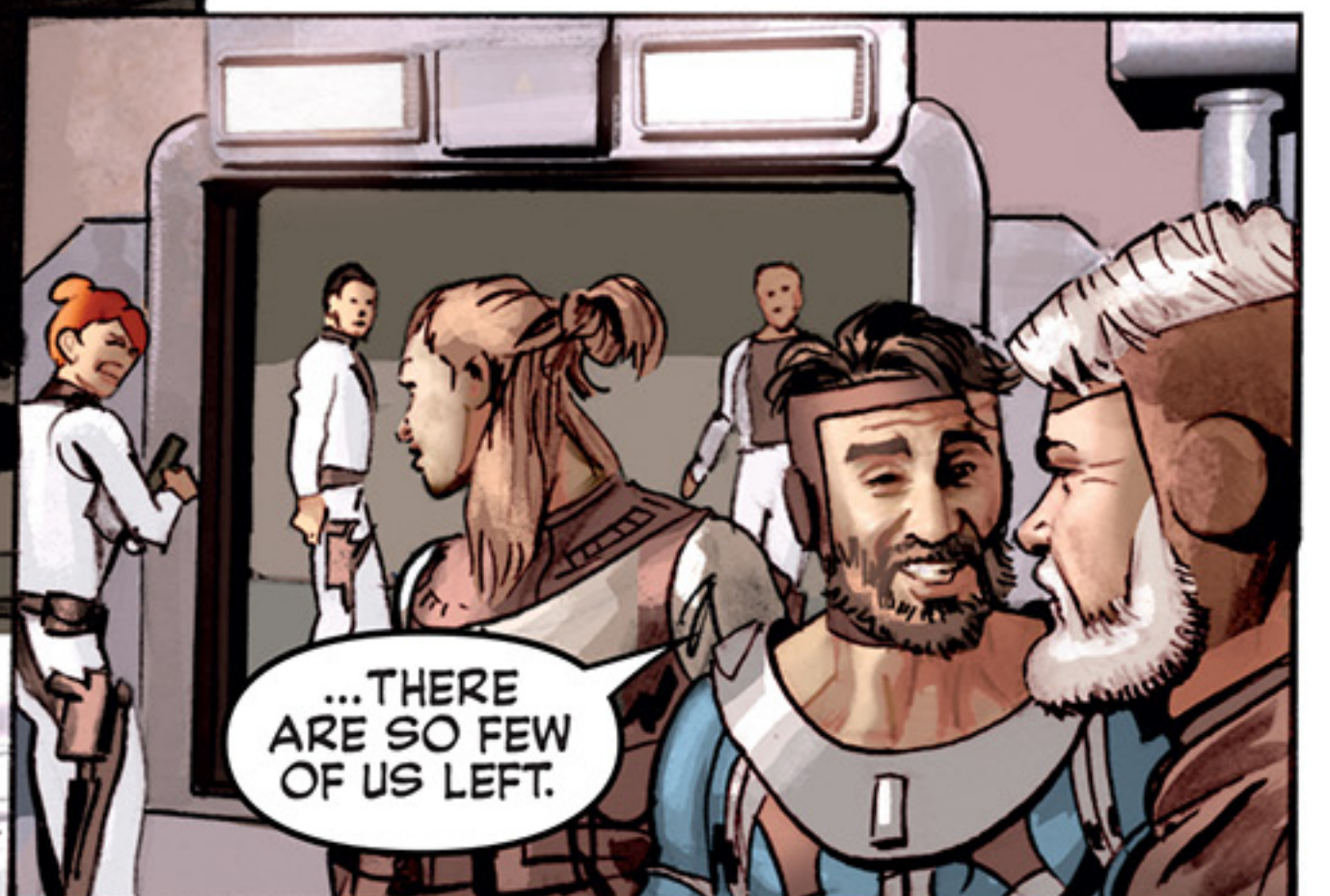
WELL,
I--



YOU
REMEMBER
MY SON
ANNIKIN.

HE
TAKES AFTER
HIS MOTHER! IT'S
SO GOOD TO SEE
YOU. WHAT A SIGHT!
BUT I REMEMBER
ANOTHER --

HAH! IT'S
WONDERFUL
TO BE WITH
ANOTHER JEDI
AGAIN...

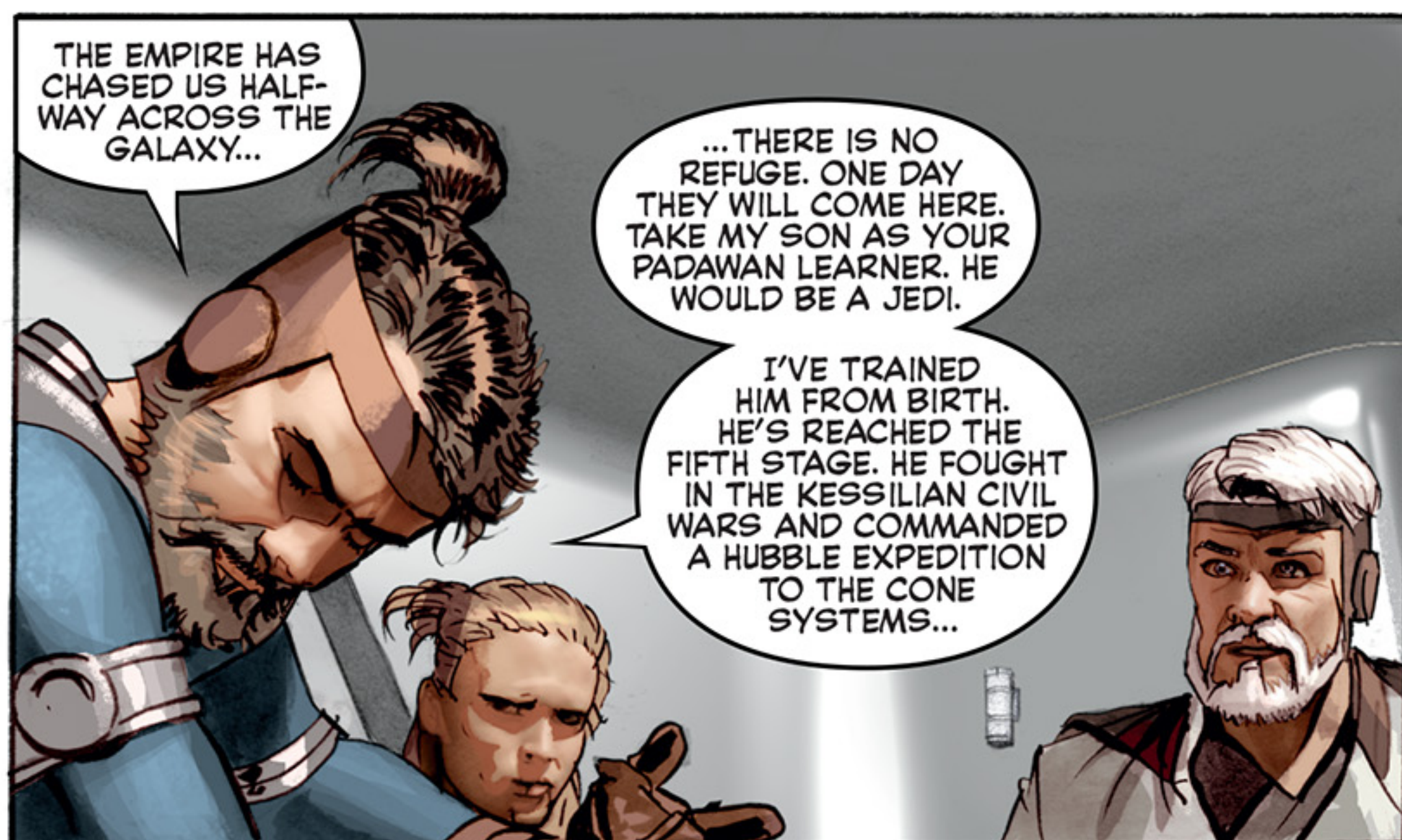


...THERE
ARE SO FEW
OF US LEFT.



WAKE UP,
GENTLEMEN.
YOU'RE ON
ALERT.

MY FRIENDS
AND I HAVE TO
TALK PRIVATELY
-- BUT KEEP ME
POSTED ON THAT
BATTALION!







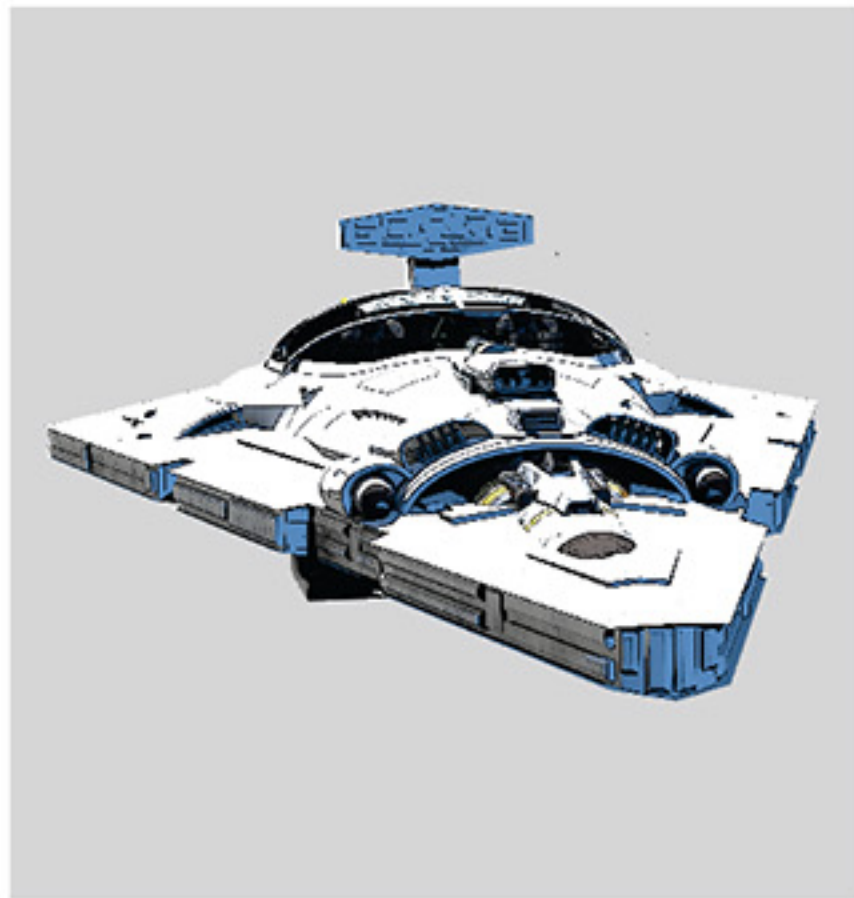
REDESIGNING A UNIVERSE

While we're waiting for your letters, please enjoy this feature of sketches and information behind the making of *The Star Wars*. Then, be sure to send your e-mails with thoughts on issue #1 (and future issues, of course!) to starwars@darkhorse.com!

For the saga of *The Star Wars*, envisioned by George Lucas *before* the films brought it to life, everything had to be new. But not so new that the prototype universe lost that feel of a galaxy we all have come to know so well. It's been a fine line to walk and a joy to create.

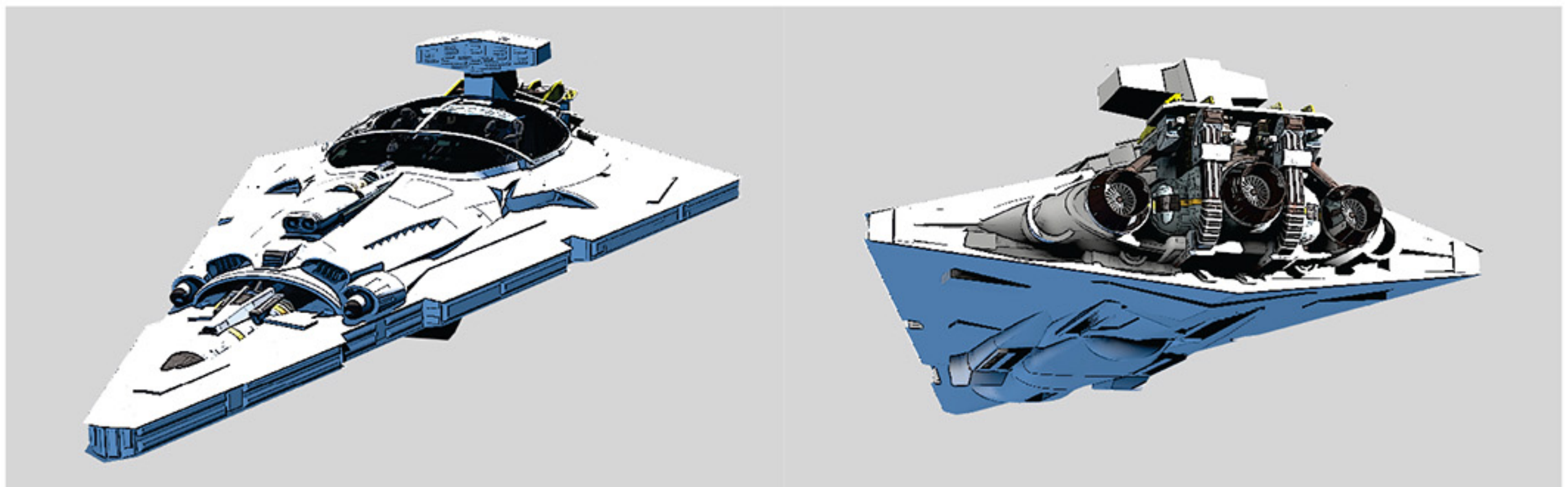
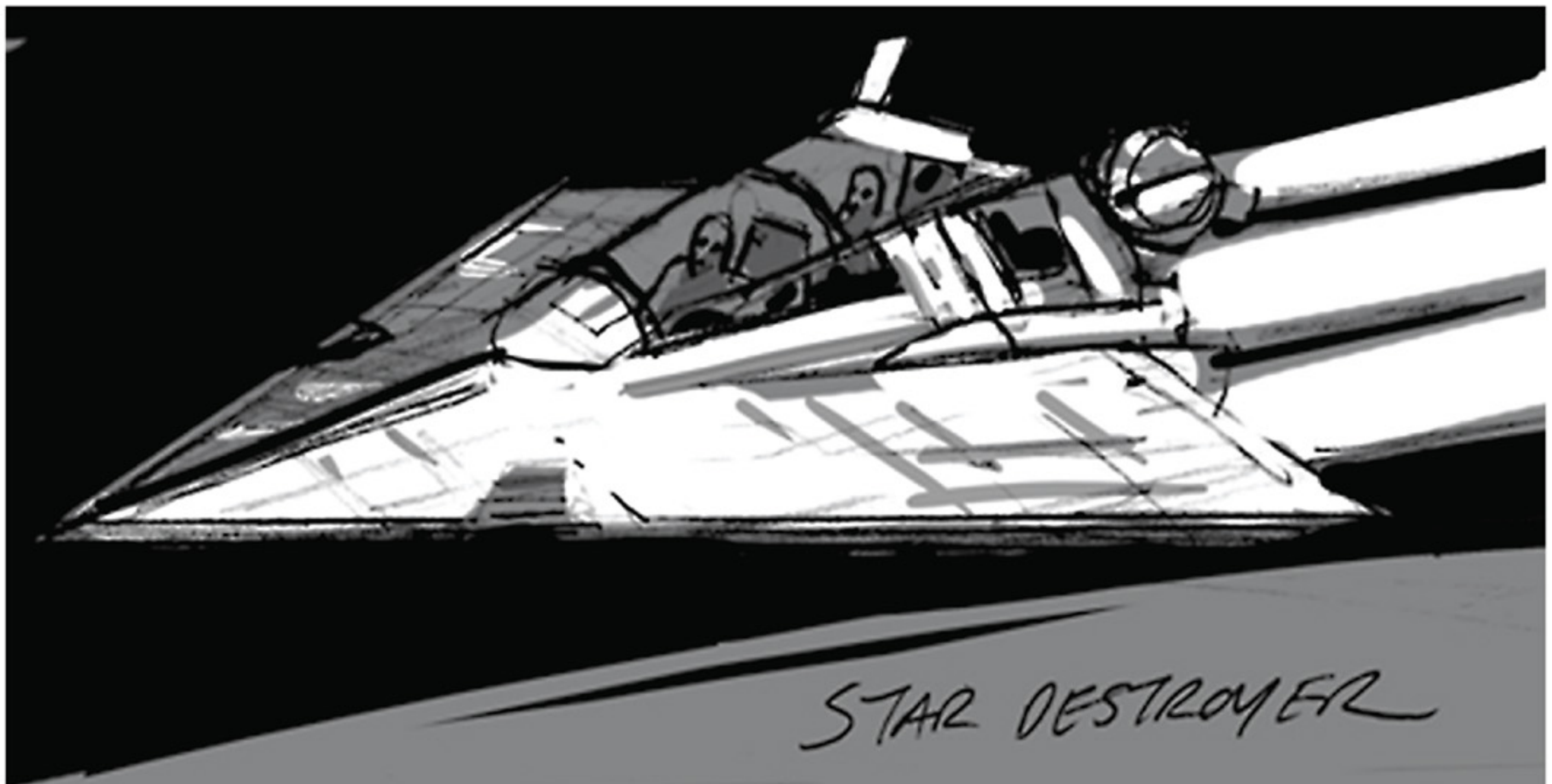
George Lucas has seen the drawn and colored pages of issue #1 and given our team the all clear! He'll continue to see every page and every issue as they're completed.

STARDESTROYERS



The bulk of the design for *The Star Wars* has fallen on the shoulders of Mike Mayhew, our interior artist. Fortunately, he has been up to the task. One of the first things he designed was the Empire's ubiquitous Stardestroyer (one word). Unlike the gigantic Star Destroyers of the films, in *The Star Wars* the Stardestroyers are sleek, heavily armed two-man fighters capable of enforcing the Emperor's will anywhere in the galaxy.

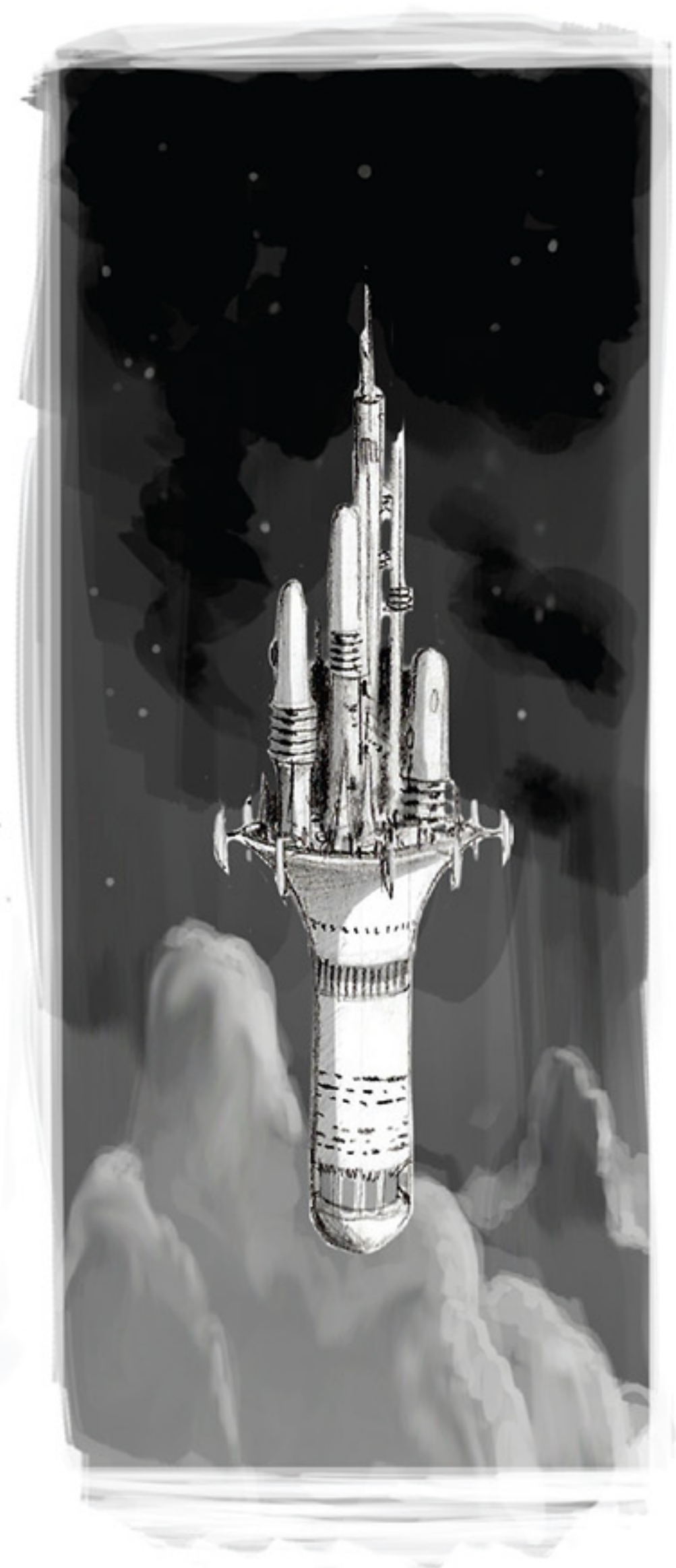
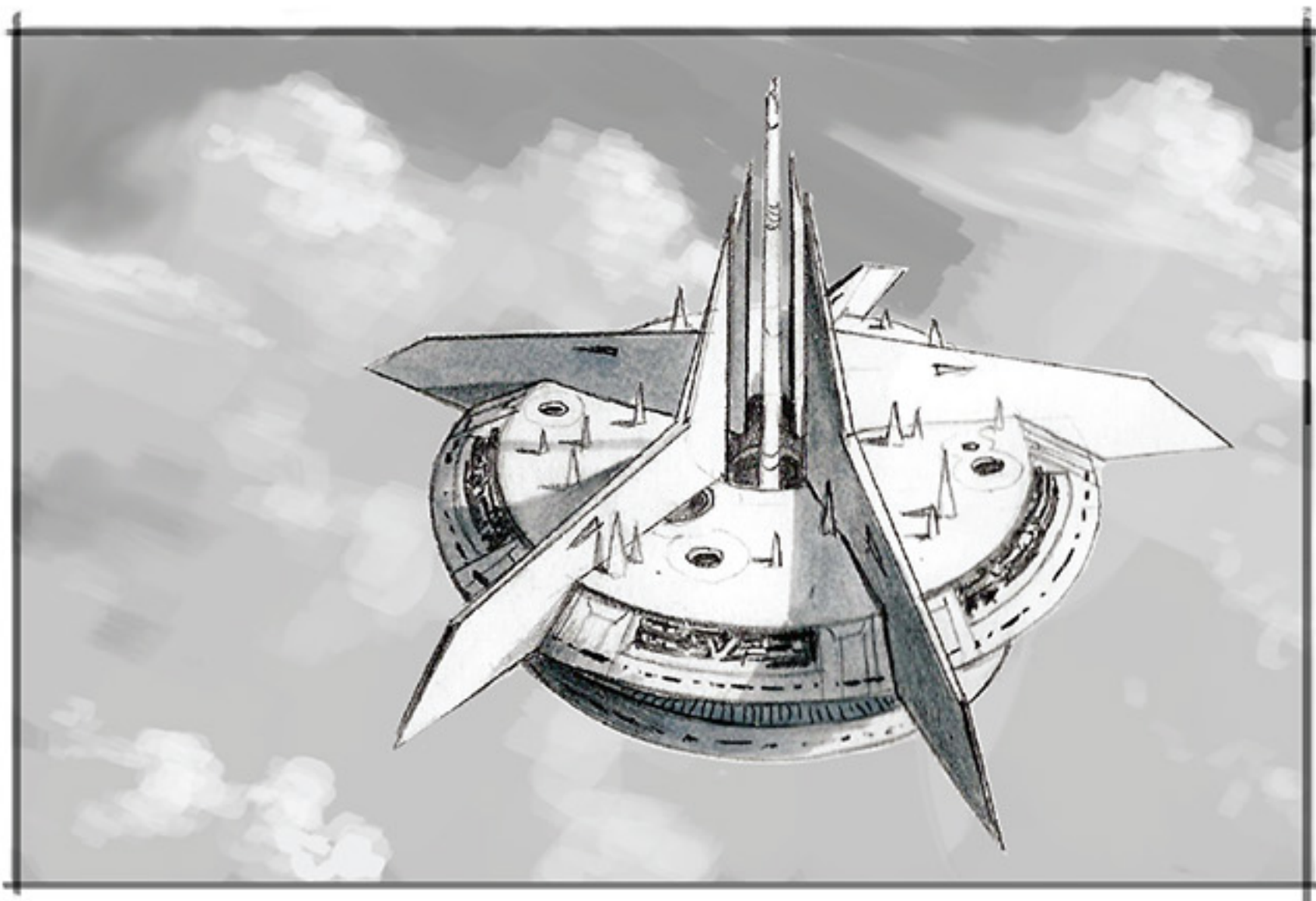
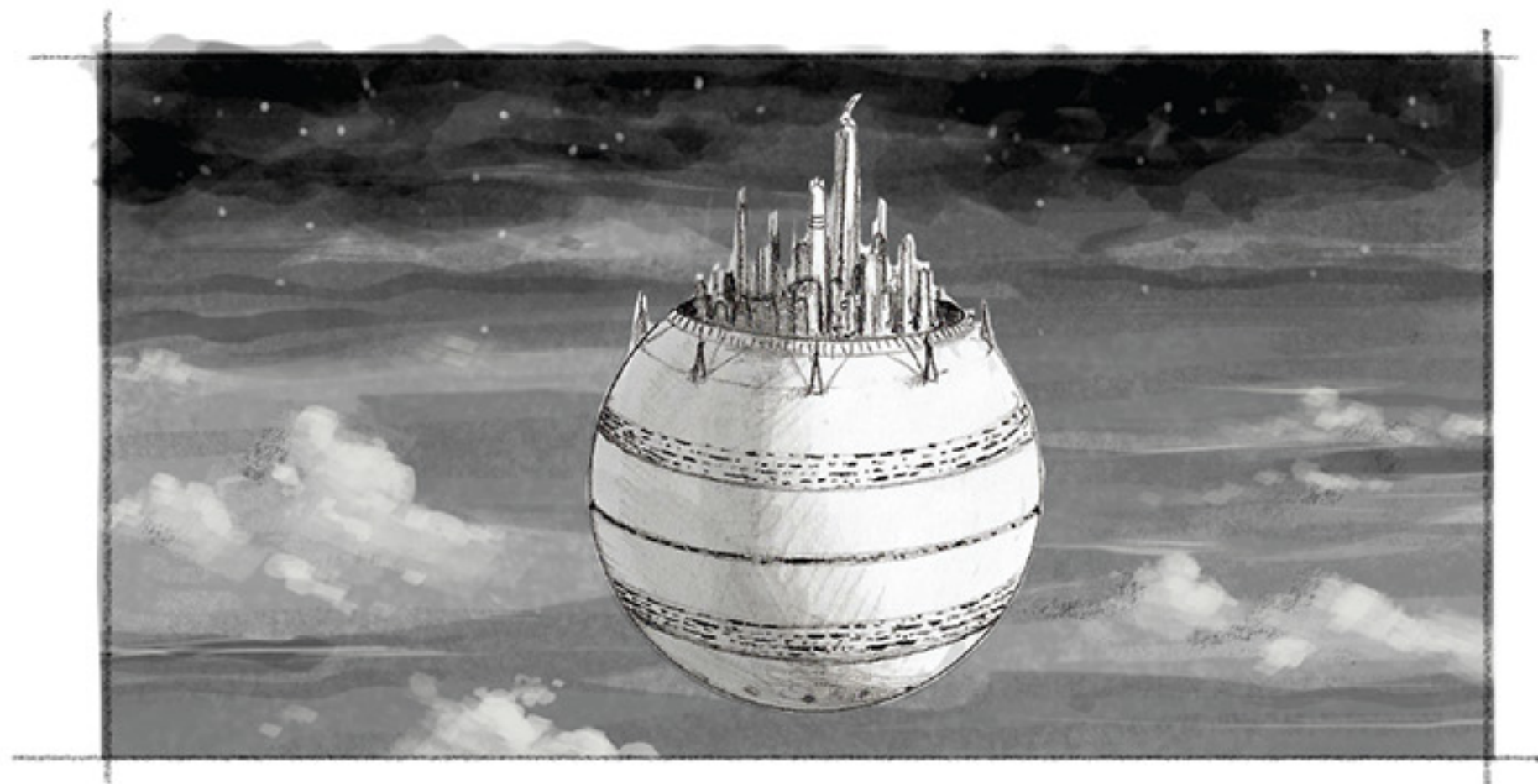
Mike's solution for these ships was simple and direct. There's no mistaking what you're seeing, despite the fact that the ships are a fraction of the size of their film counterparts.



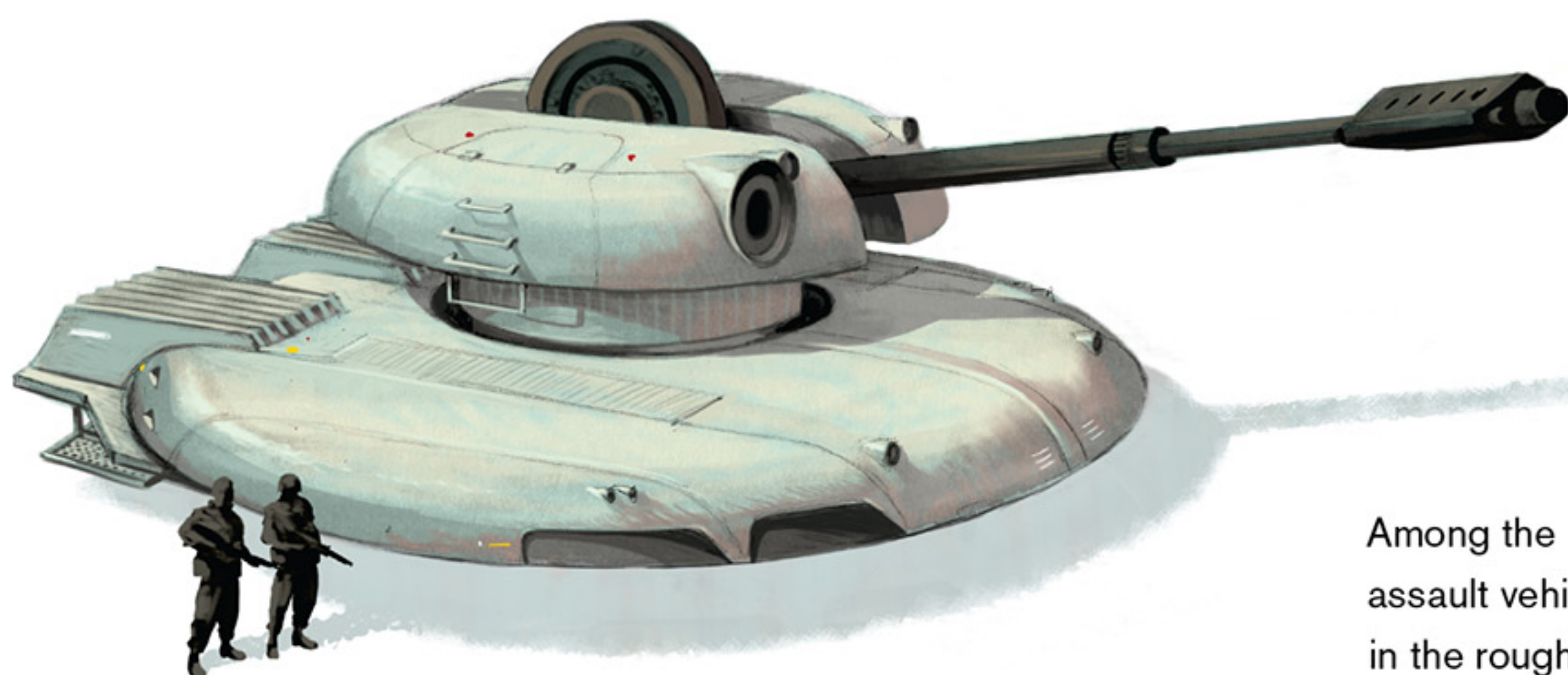
THE IMPERIAL CAPITAL

Forget Coruscant. In *The Star Wars*, the capital of this Empire is the gaseous planet Alderaan, and the city of the same name which floats majestically above it. Alderaan is the clear precursor to Bespin's Cloud City from *The Empire Strikes Back*, but more regal and less industrial. (You've no doubt noticed that many of the place and character names which originated in *The Star Wars* showed up later in the movies—usually applied to all-new locations or characters.)

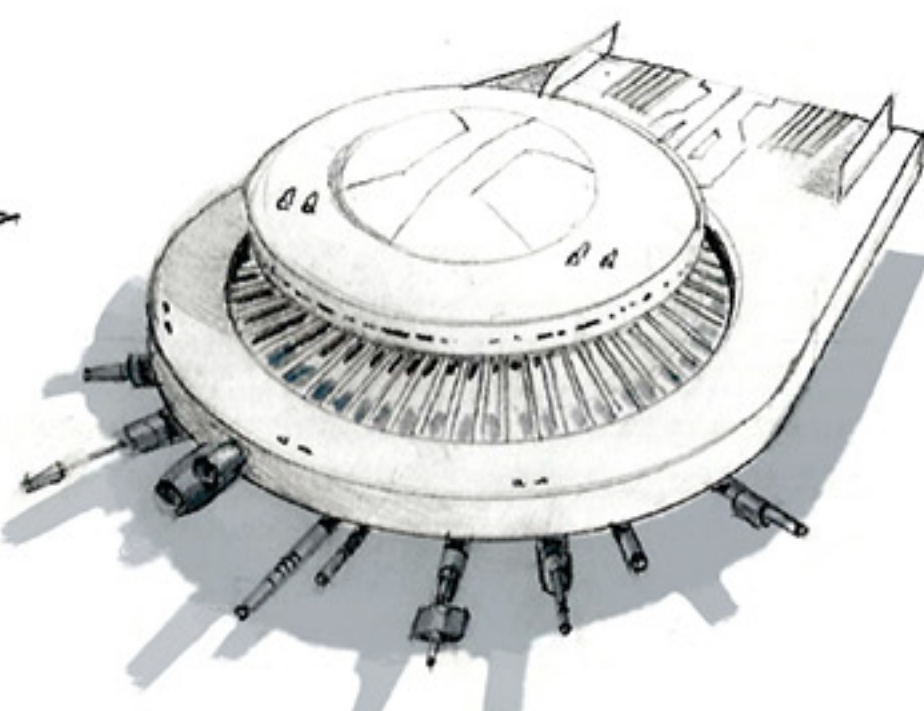
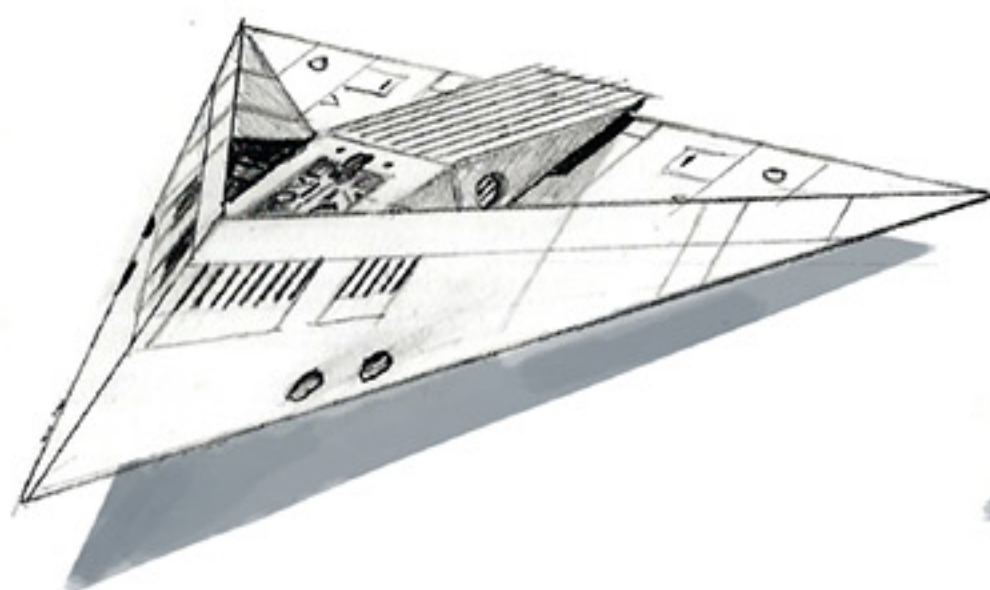
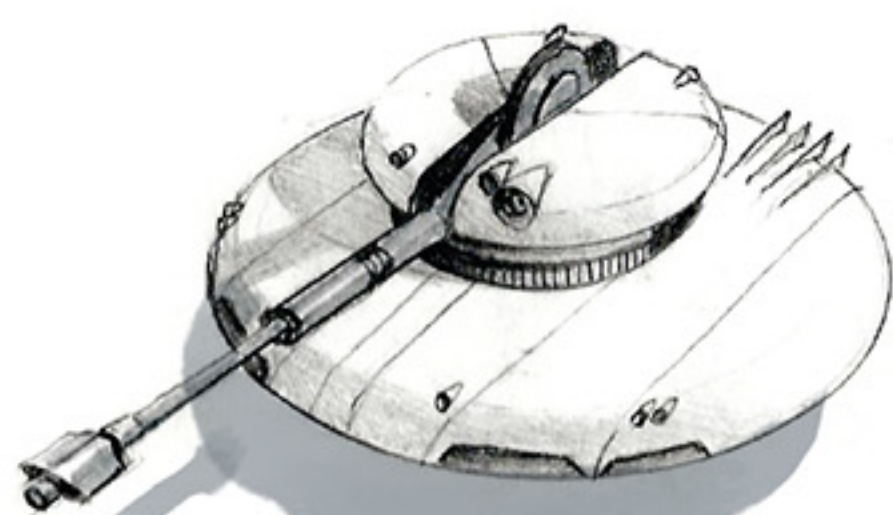
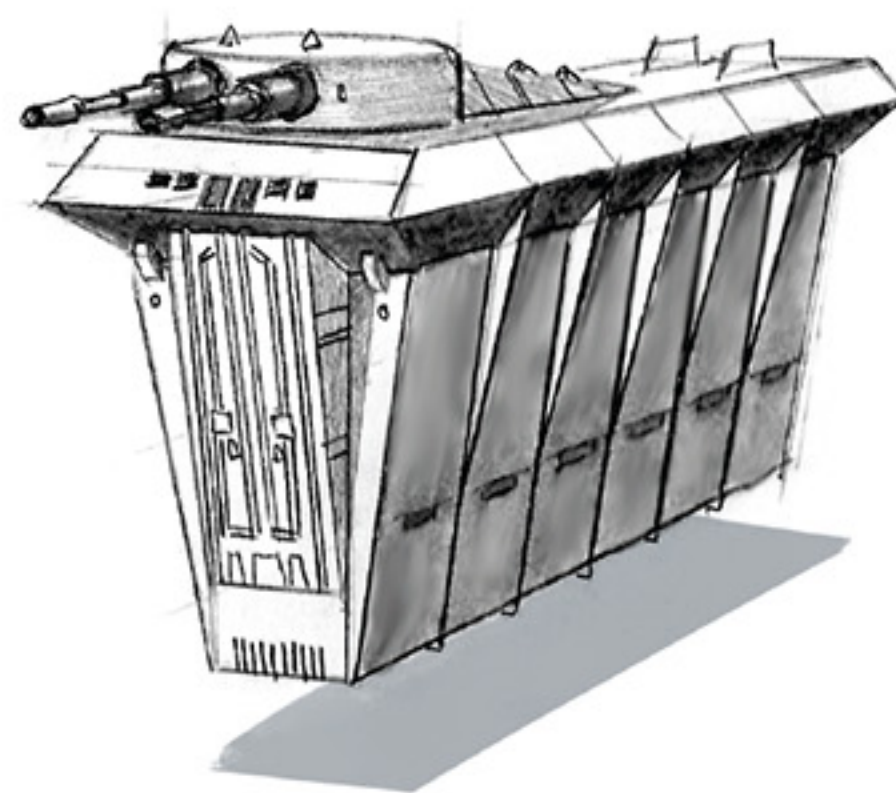
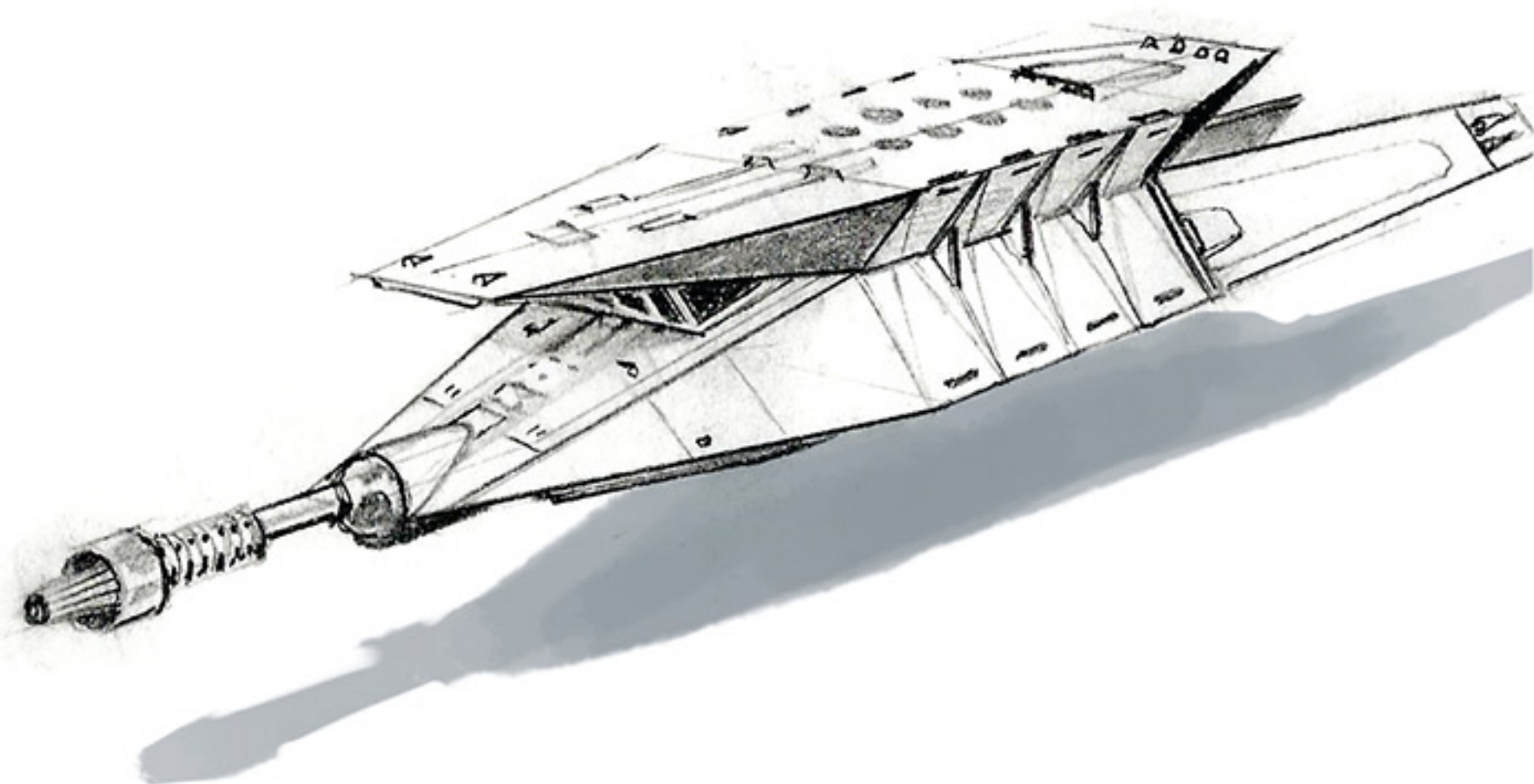
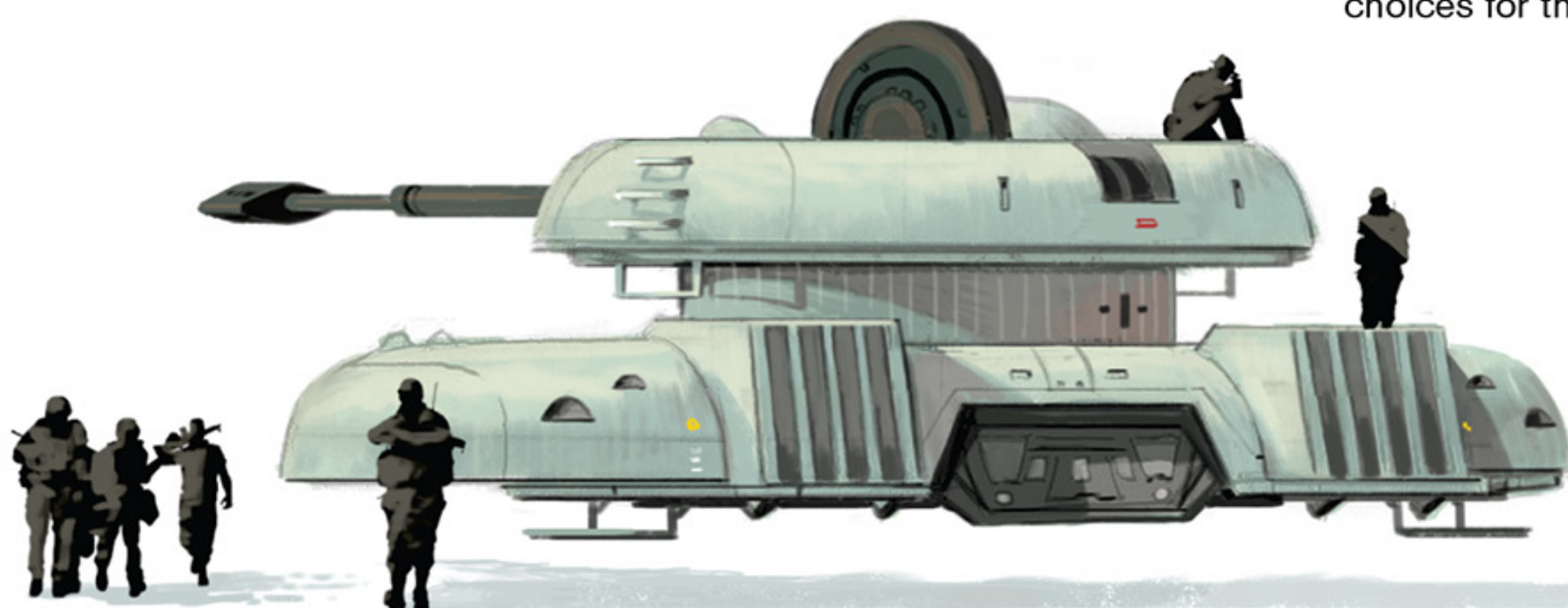
Artist Sean Cooke, who supplied a number of designs for this project, produced a variety of floating cities for us to choose from.



IMPERIAL AIR TANKS

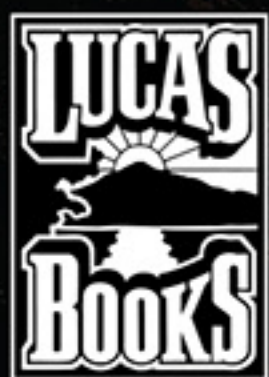


Among the Empire's primary assault vehicles, the Air Tanks in the rough-draft screenplay eventually saw life on the big screen as the Trade Federation's Hover Tanks. Sean Cooke also provided a number of diverse choices for this design.





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RINZLER
MAYHEW
BEREDO

BASED ON GEORGE LUCAS'S ORIGINAL ROUGH-DRAFT SCREENPLAY

THE STAR WARS



THE EMPIRE STRIKES!

ADAPTED FROM THE ORIGINAL ROUGH-DRAFT SCREENPLAY BY GEORGE LUCAS

THE STAR WARS

After his youngest son is killed in an attack by a Sith Knight on the fourth moon of Utapau, Jedi Kane Starkiller and his surviving son Annikin decide to return to their homeworld of Aquilae.

On Aquilae, the king and his council debate signing a treaty with the New Galactic Empire—unaware that General Darth Vader is already preparing to attack. Believing there is still time to find peace, the royal family sends Princess Leia away to school.

Arriving on Aquilae, Kane Starkiller is reunited with fellow Jedi General Luke Skywalker. Kane begs Luke to take Annikin as his apprentice, and reveals that he is dying. But the discussion is interrupted by word of something huge moving through space toward Aquilae . . .

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AQUILAE. THE WAR ROOM OF THE HIDDEN UNDERGROUND FORTRESS FAR BENEATH THE PALACE OF LITE.

IT'S
A **SOLID**
OBJECT -- BIG
AS OUR THIRD
MOON!

IT'S TOO
LARGE TO BE
MAN MADE, BUT
IT'S TOO SLOW
TO BE A
COMET.

IT'S
TOO FAR OUT
TO SAY WITH
CERTAINTY.

THEN I'LL BE
WITH THE KING.
REPORT AS SOON
AS YOU CAN GET
A READING
ON IT.

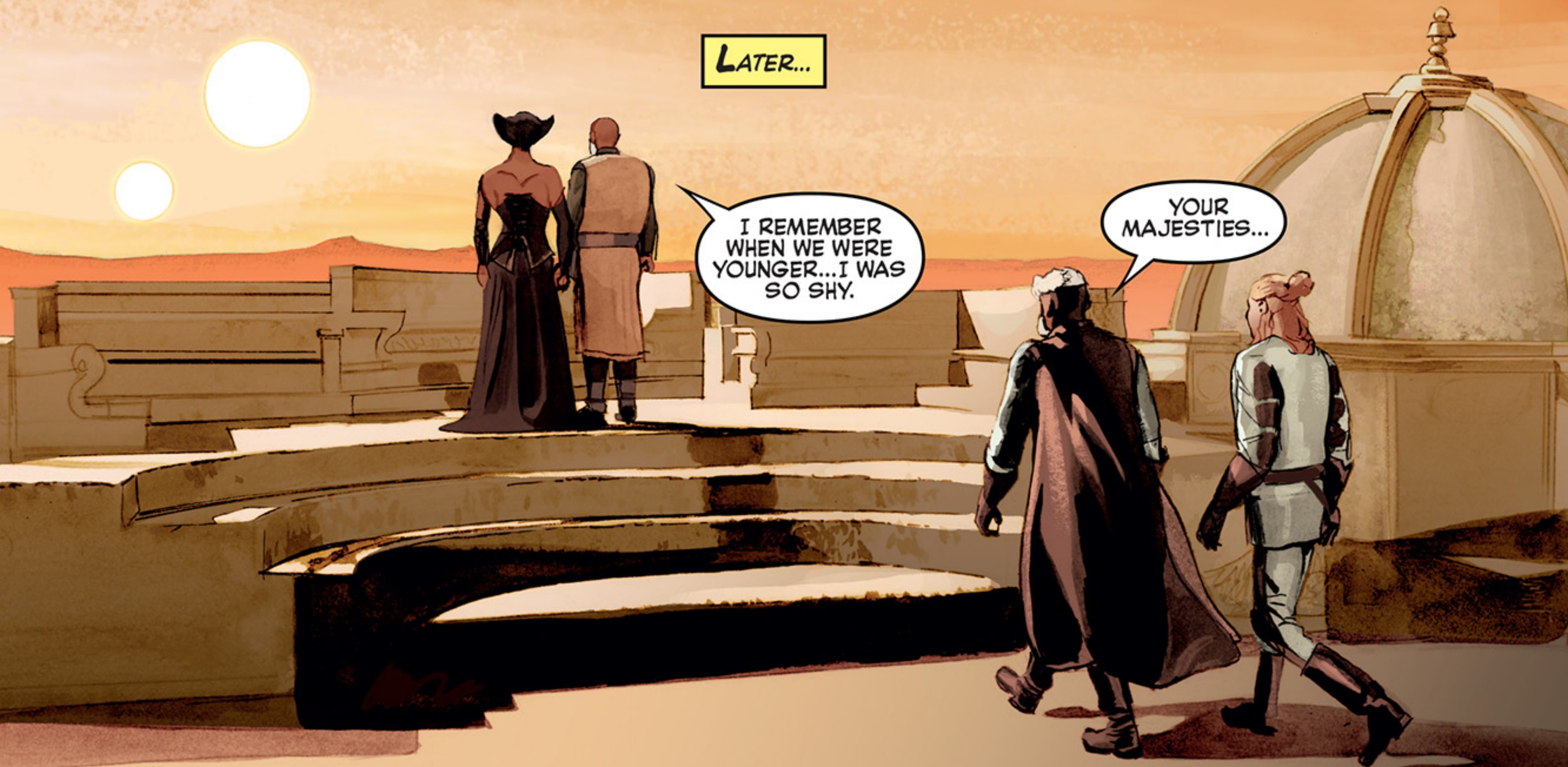
CAPTAIN ANNIKIN
STARKILLER, FROM
NOW ON YOU STICK
CLOSE TO ME.

SO
LONG,
DAD.

DO AS
YOU'RE TOLD,
BUT THINK FOR
YOURSELF.

MAY
THE FORCE
OF OTHERS BE
WITH YOU, SON.
AND WITH YOU,
LUKE.

LATER...



I REMEMBER WHEN WE WERE YOUNGER... I WAS SO SHY.

YOUR MAJESTIES...



OH, LUKE. JUST IN TIME FOR DINNER.

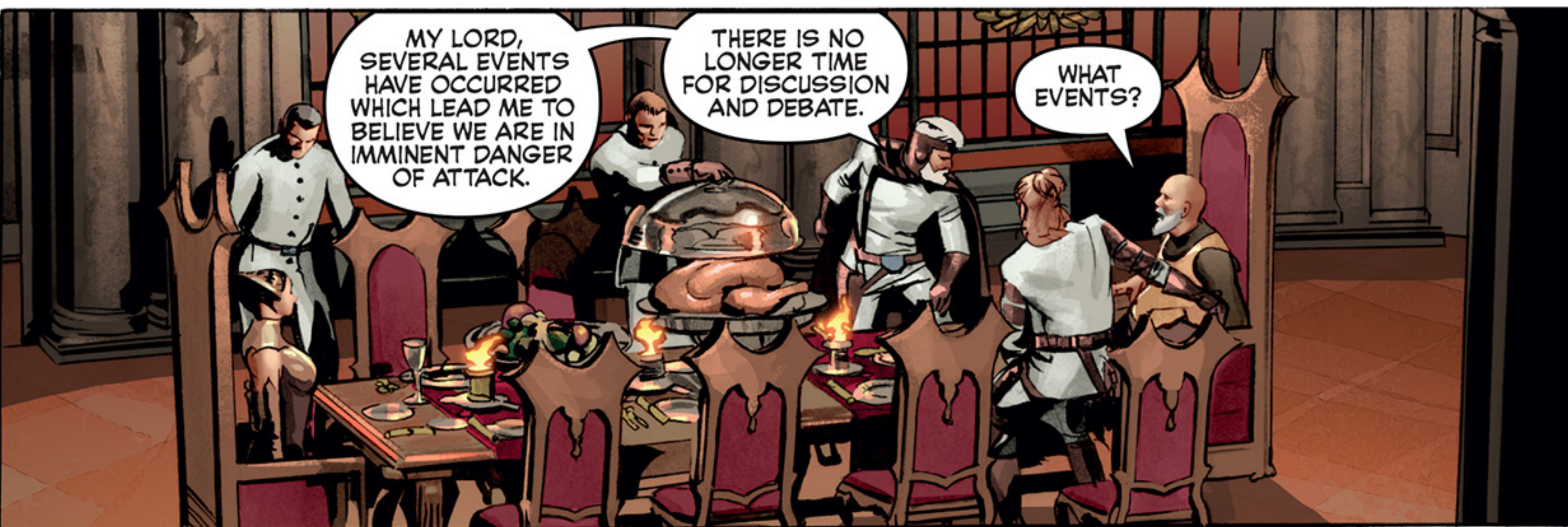
I'VE COME FOR OTHER REASONS. COULD --

IS KANE JOINING US?



HE LEFT FOR THE SPACEPORT AT GORDON TO VISIT AN OLD FRIEND -- HAN SOLO, THE UREALIAN.

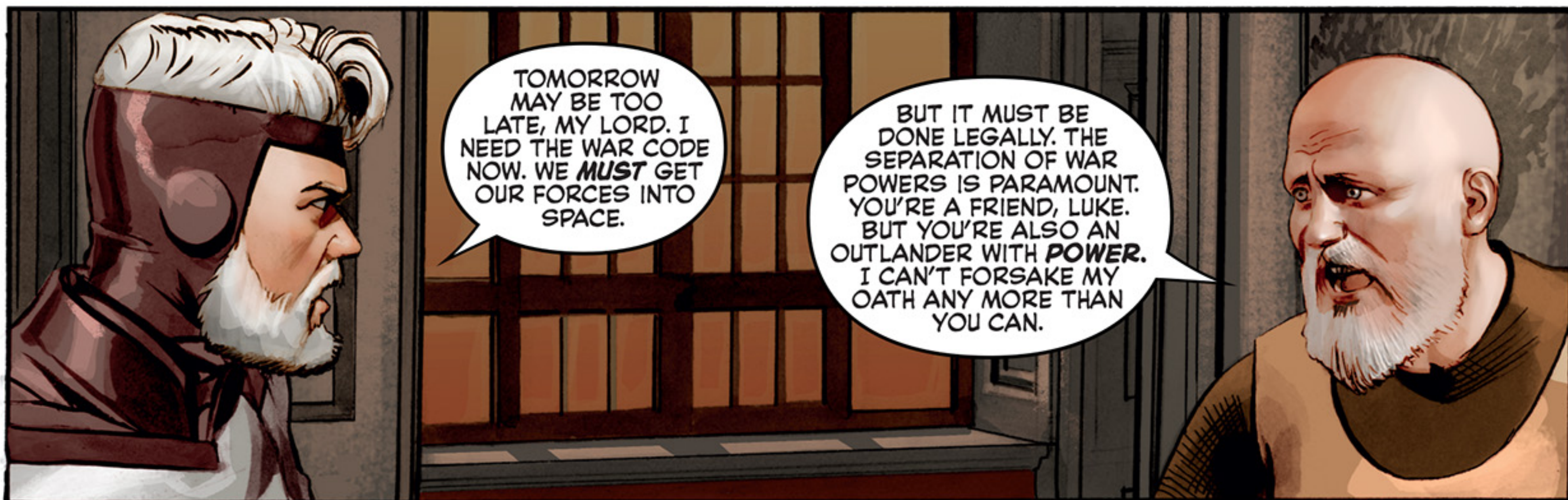
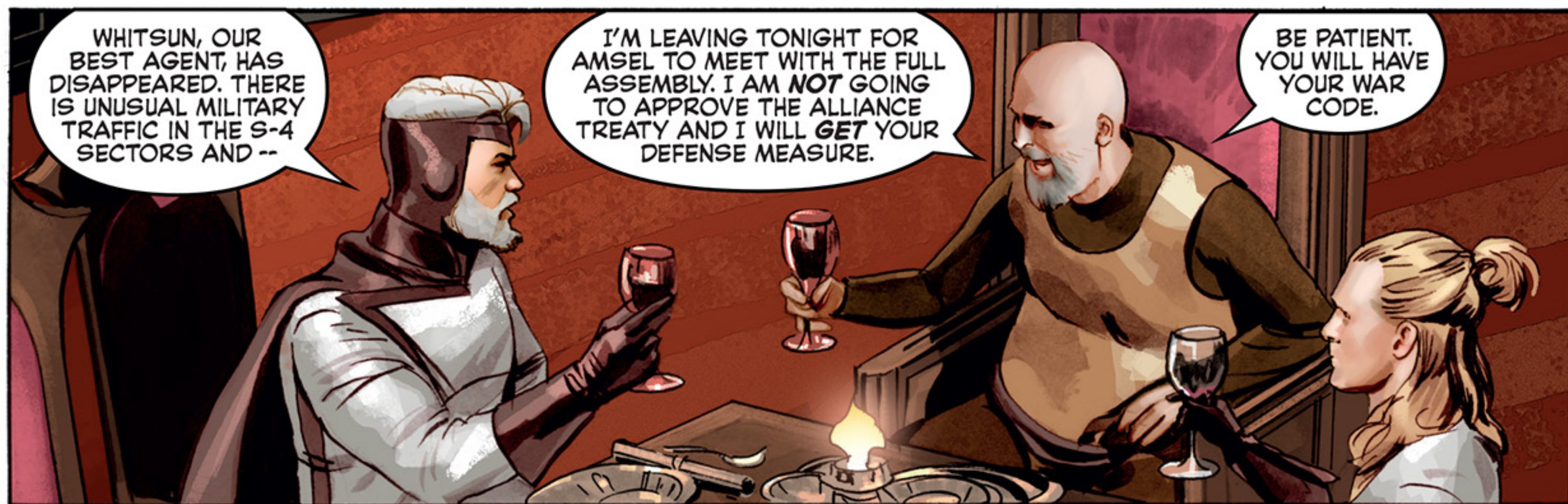
AQUILAE IS BECOMING QUITE A REFUGE.

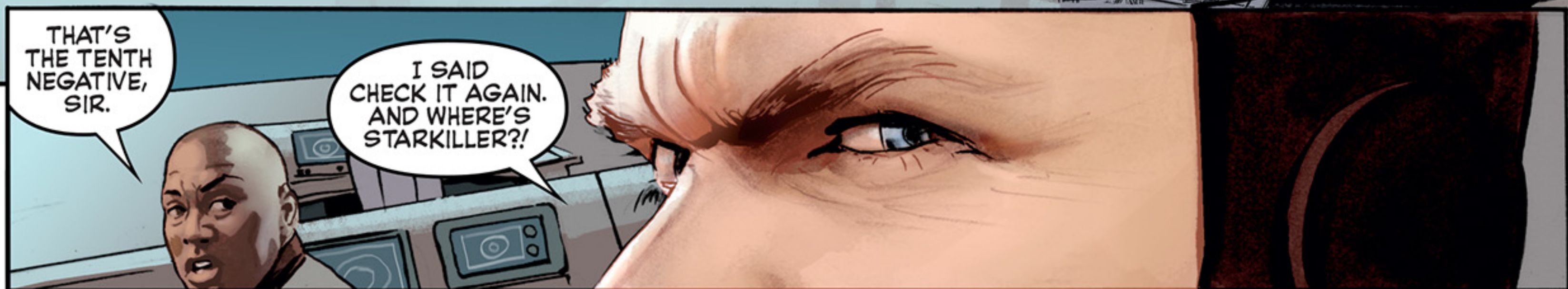
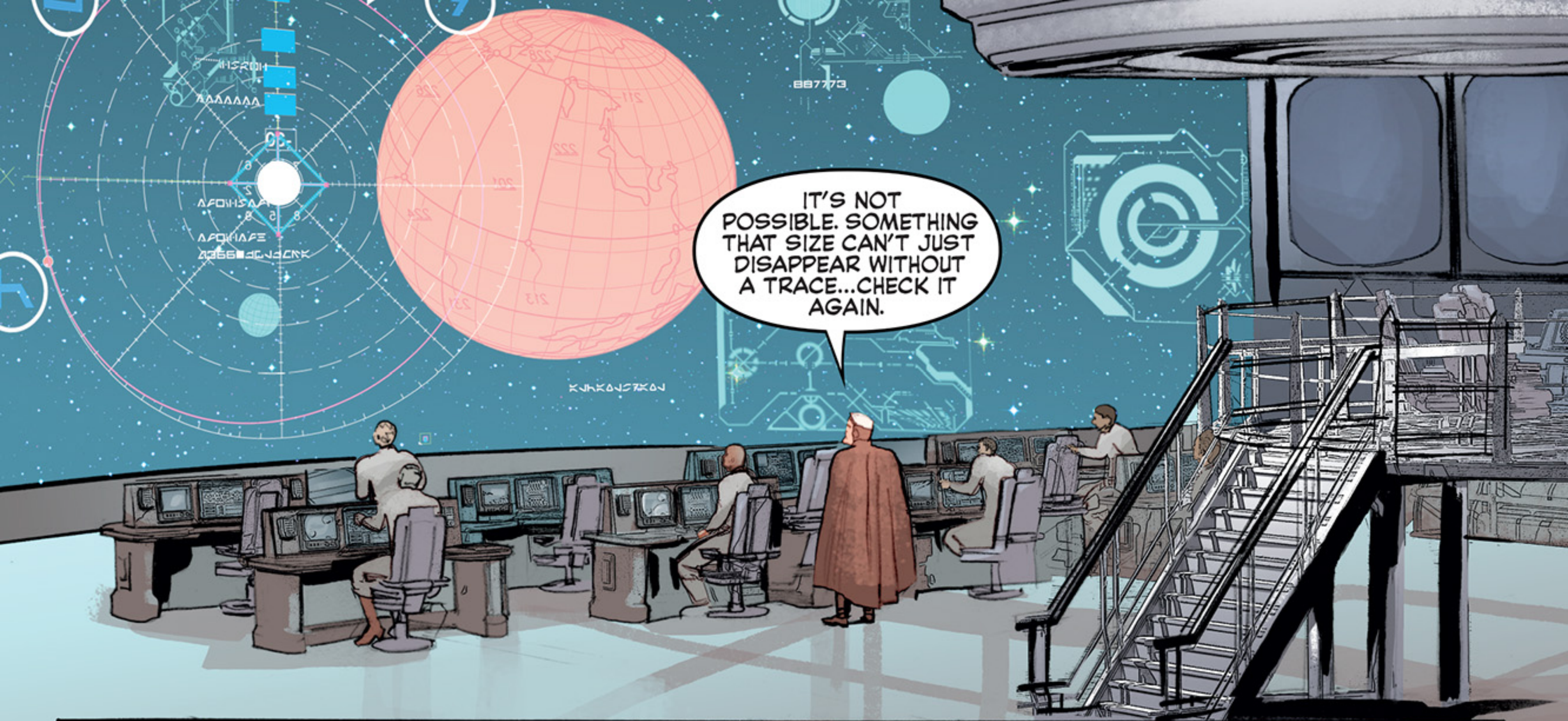


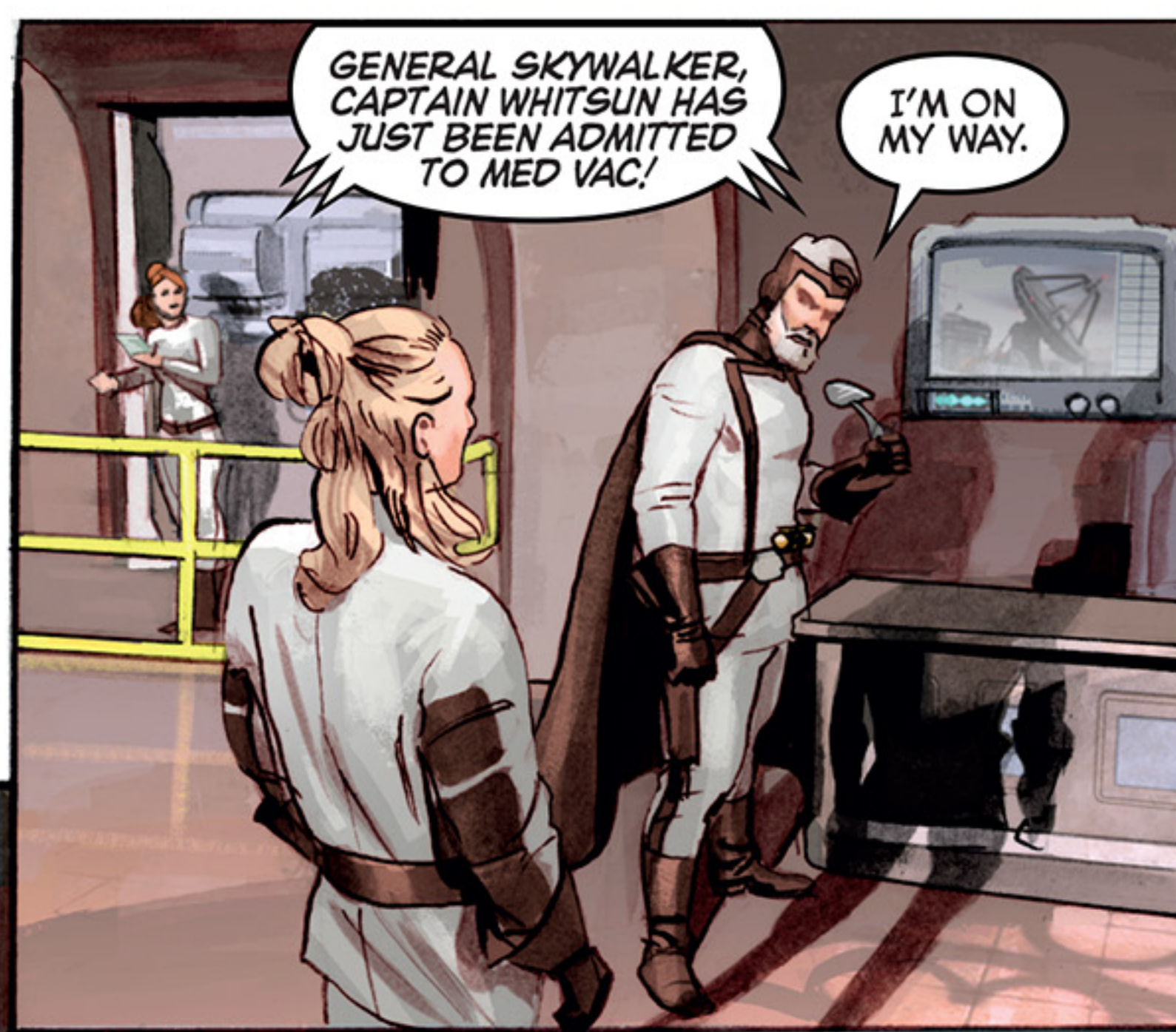
MY LORD, SEVERAL EVENTS HAVE OCCURRED WHICH LEAD ME TO BELIEVE WE ARE IN IMMINENT DANGER OF ATTACK.

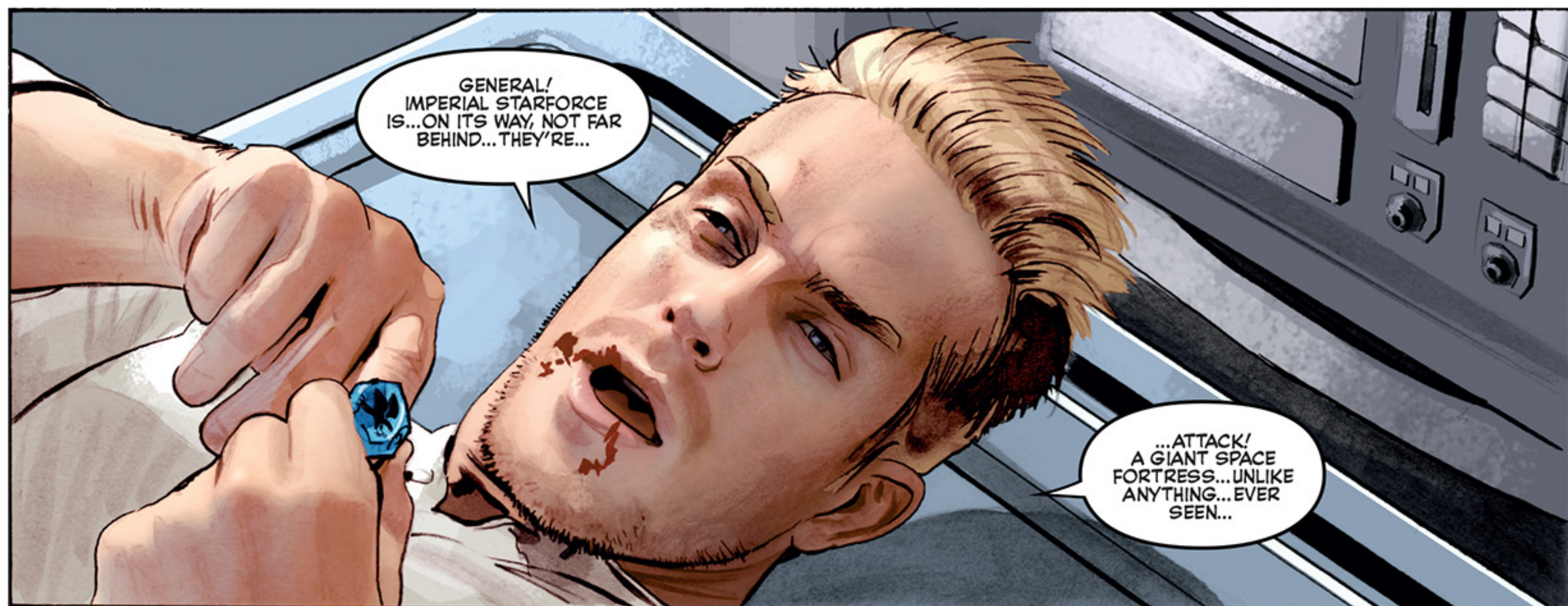
THERE IS NO LONGER TIME FOR DISCUSSION AND DEBATE.

WHAT EVENTS?









GENERAL!
IMPERIAL STARFORCE
IS...ON ITS WAY, NOT FAR
BEHIND...THEY'RE...

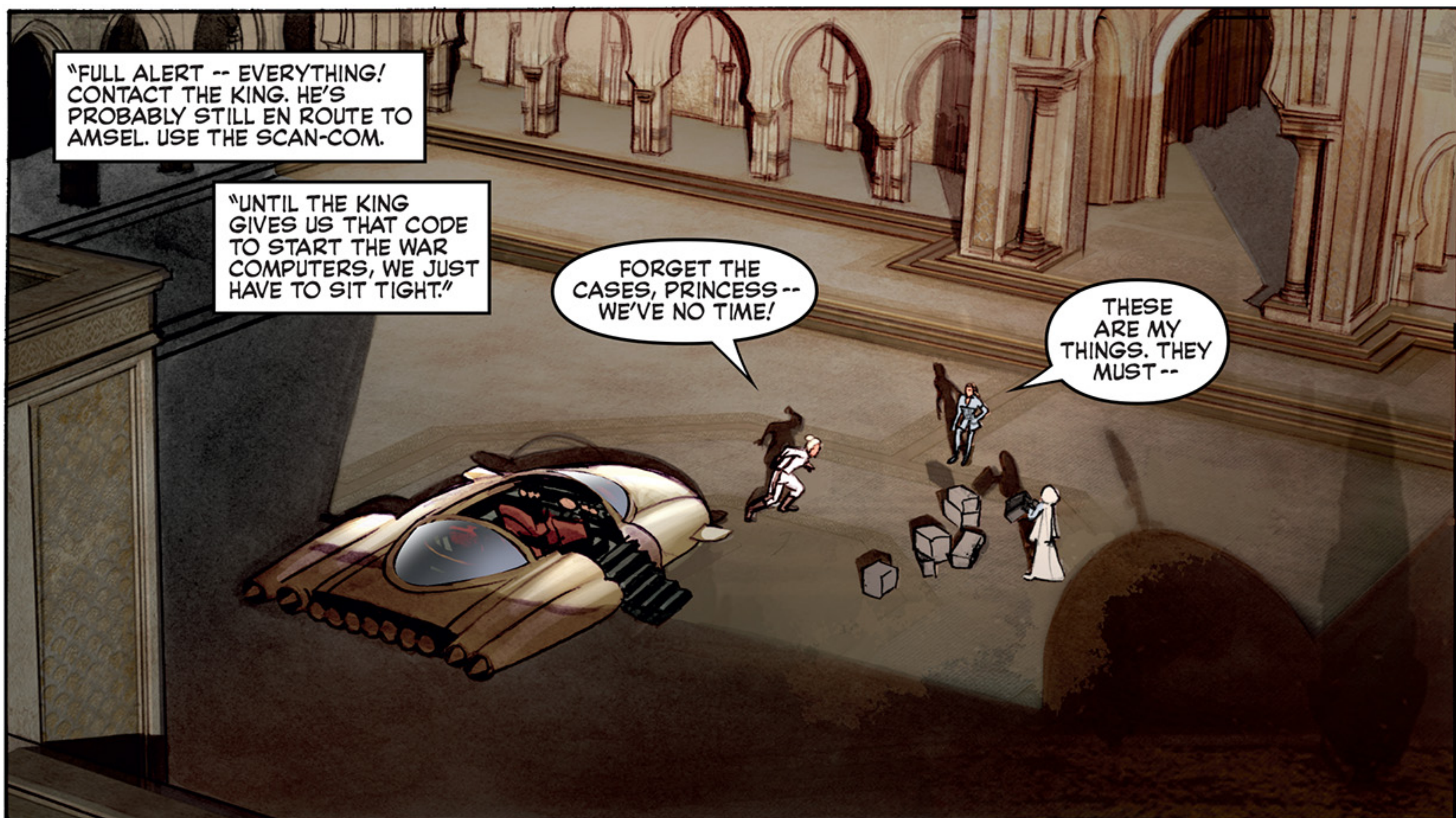
...ATTACK!
A GIANT SPACE
FORTRESS...UNLIKE
ANYTHING...EVER
SEEN...



THEY'LL SHOW UP
ON OUR SCREENS
AT SUNRISE.
THEY'LL ATTACK
BEFORE THAT.



TAKE THE FASTEST
LANDSPEEDER TO
CHATHOS. PICK UP
PRINCESS LEIA -- AND
ONLY PRINCESS LEIA.
RETURN BY WAY OF
THE GREAT REEF
MOST SPEED!

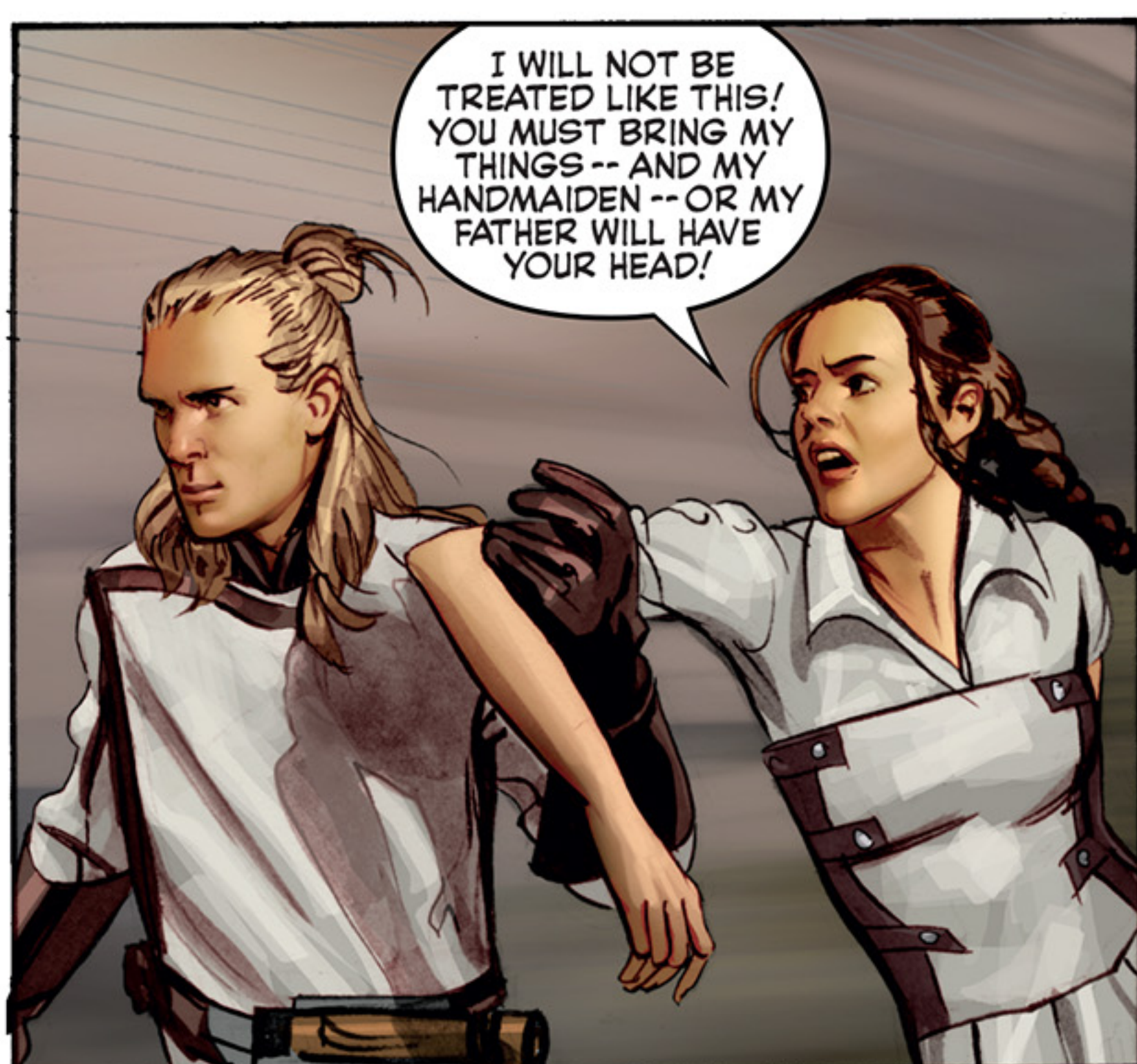
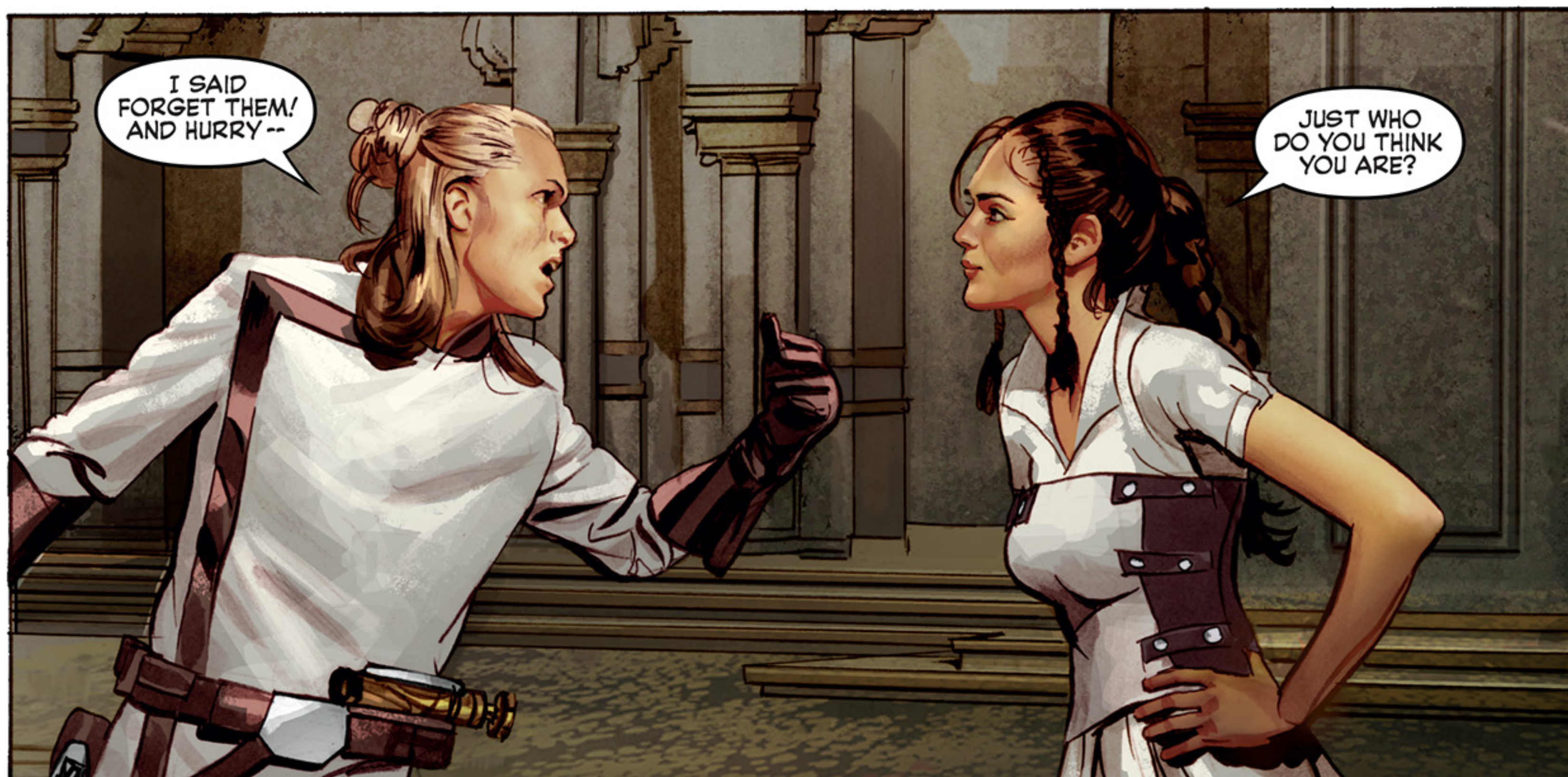


"FULL ALERT -- EVERYTHING!
CONTACT THE KING. HE'S
PROBABLY STILL EN ROUTE TO
AMSEL. USE THE SCAN-COM.

"UNTIL THE KING
GIVES US THAT CODE
TO START THE WAR
COMPUTERS, WE JUST
HAVE TO SIT TIGHT."

FORGET THE
CASES, PRINCESS --
WE'VE NO TIME!

THESE
ARE MY
THINGS. THEY
MUST --



EARLY THE NEXT MORNING...

SIR,
WE'VE MADE
CONTACT WITH
KING KAYOS!

I'M
A JEDI
BENDU!

NO, I'M
A JEDI!

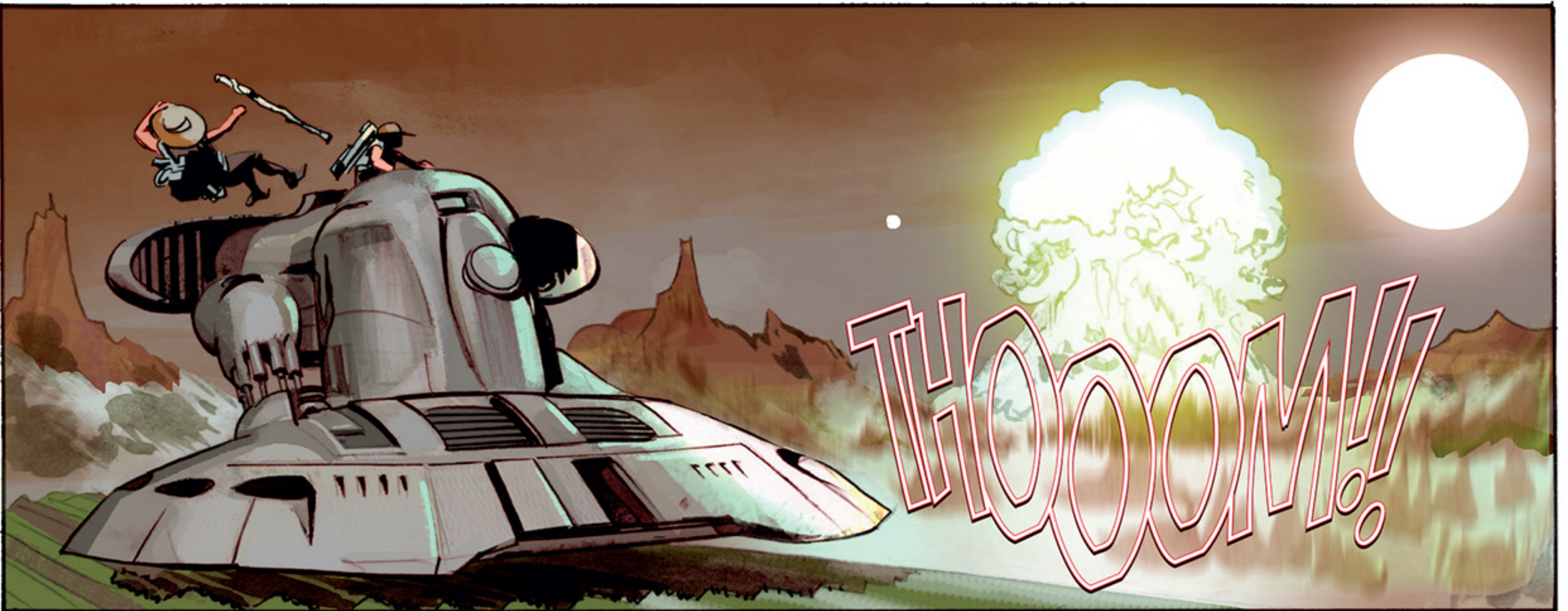
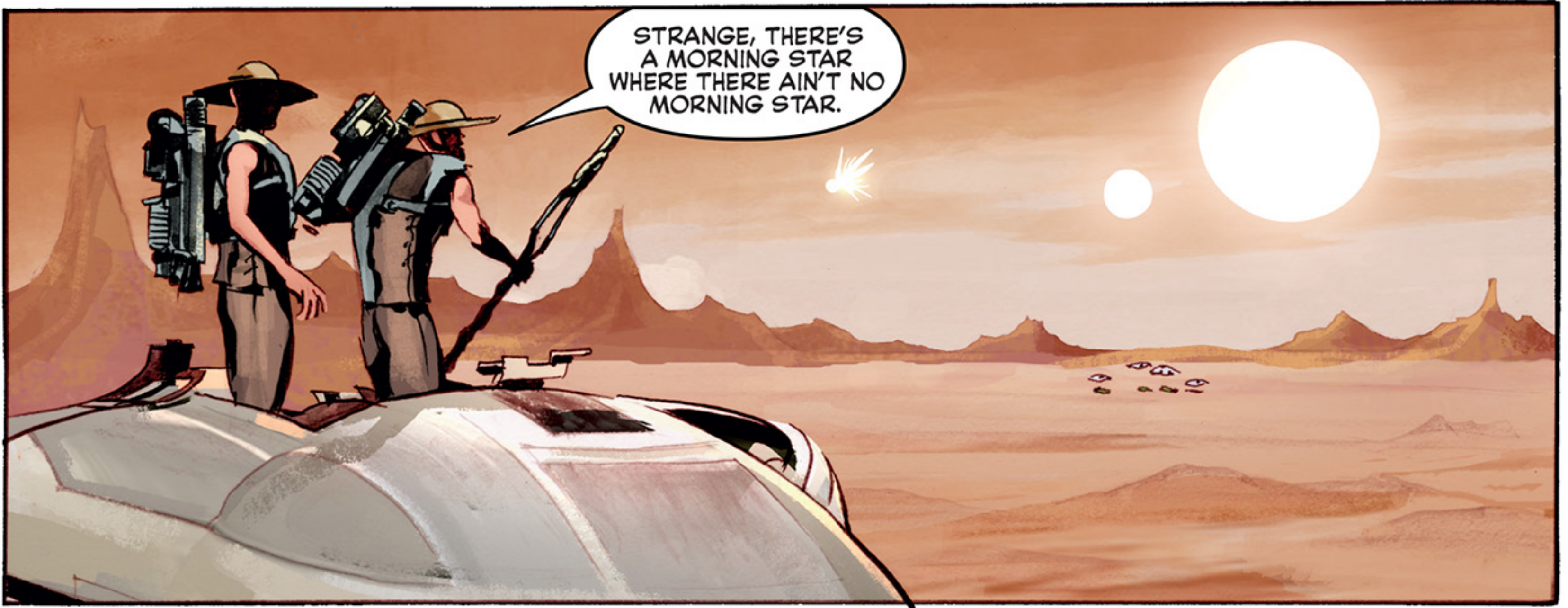
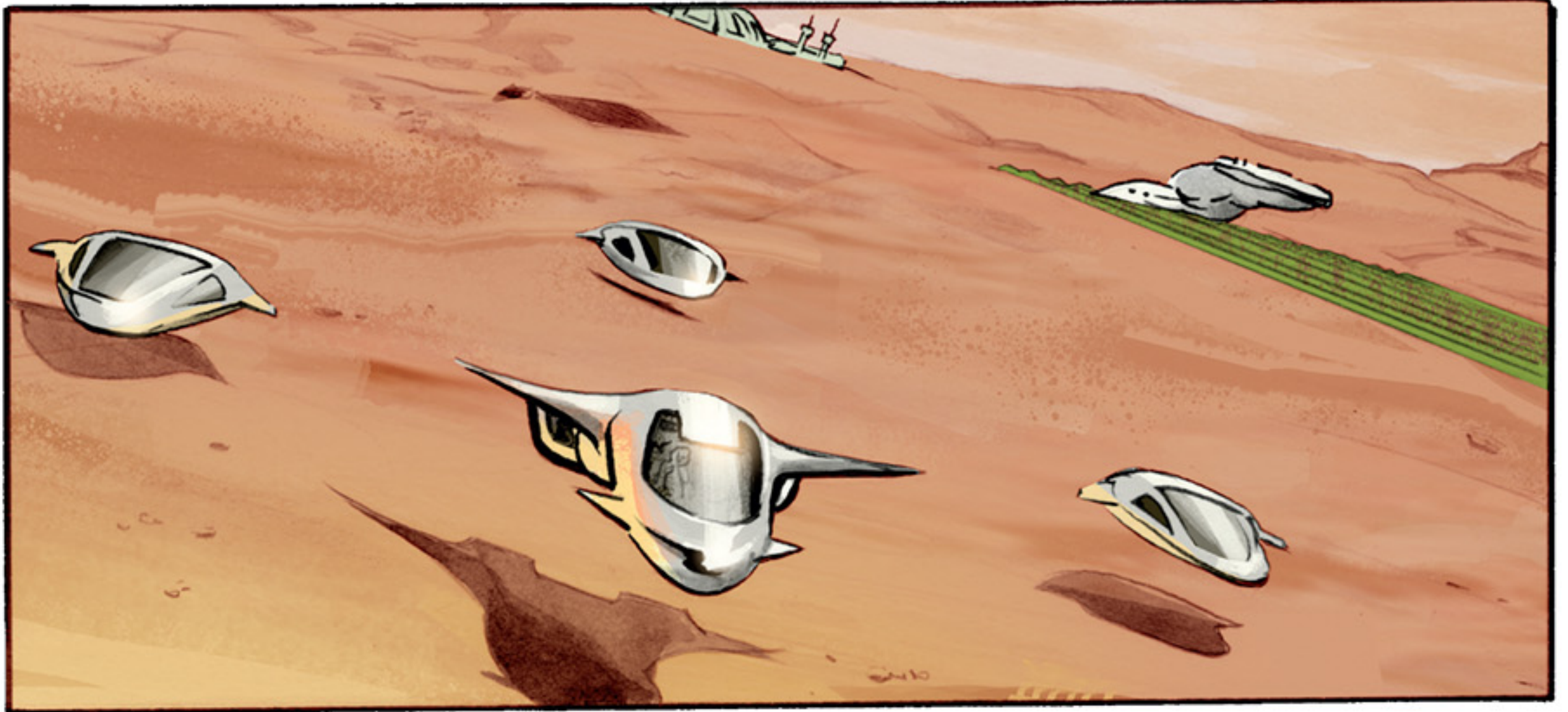
KING KAYOS, THE
EMPIRE WILL ATTACK
AT SUNRISE. MY AGENT
MADE IT BACK -- WE
HAVE PROOF. I **NEED**
THE WAR CODE!

I'LL
RELAY IT
DIRECTLY TO THE
COMPUTER. IS
BREHA...?

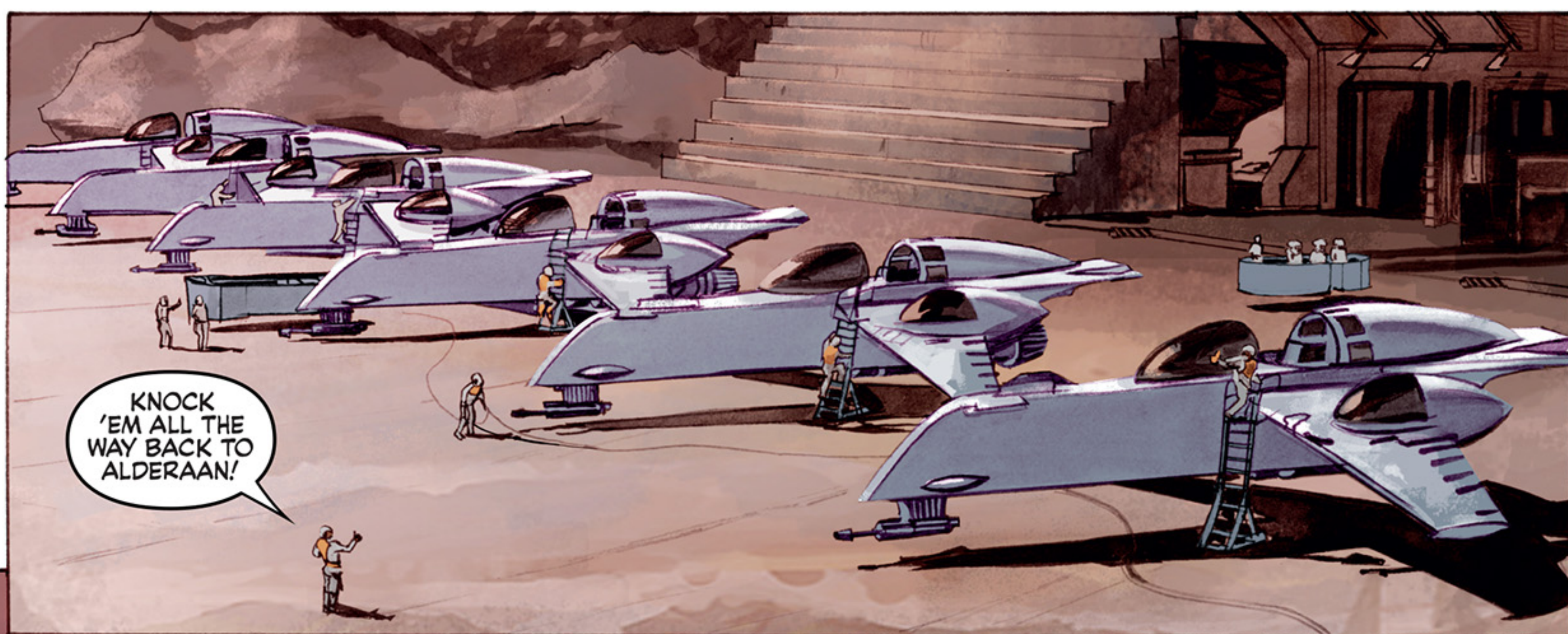
THE ROYAL
FAMILY IS SAFE.
STARKILLER HAS
GONE AFTER
PRINCESS
LEIA.

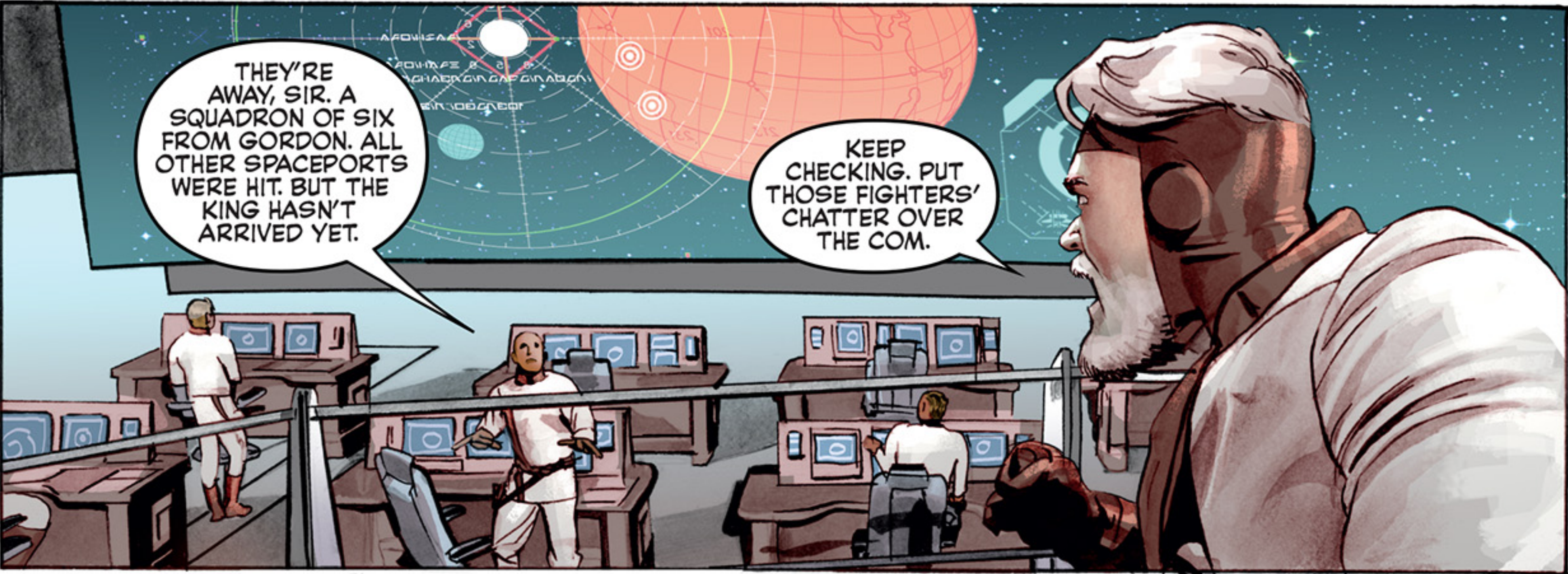
I'M ON
MY WAY --

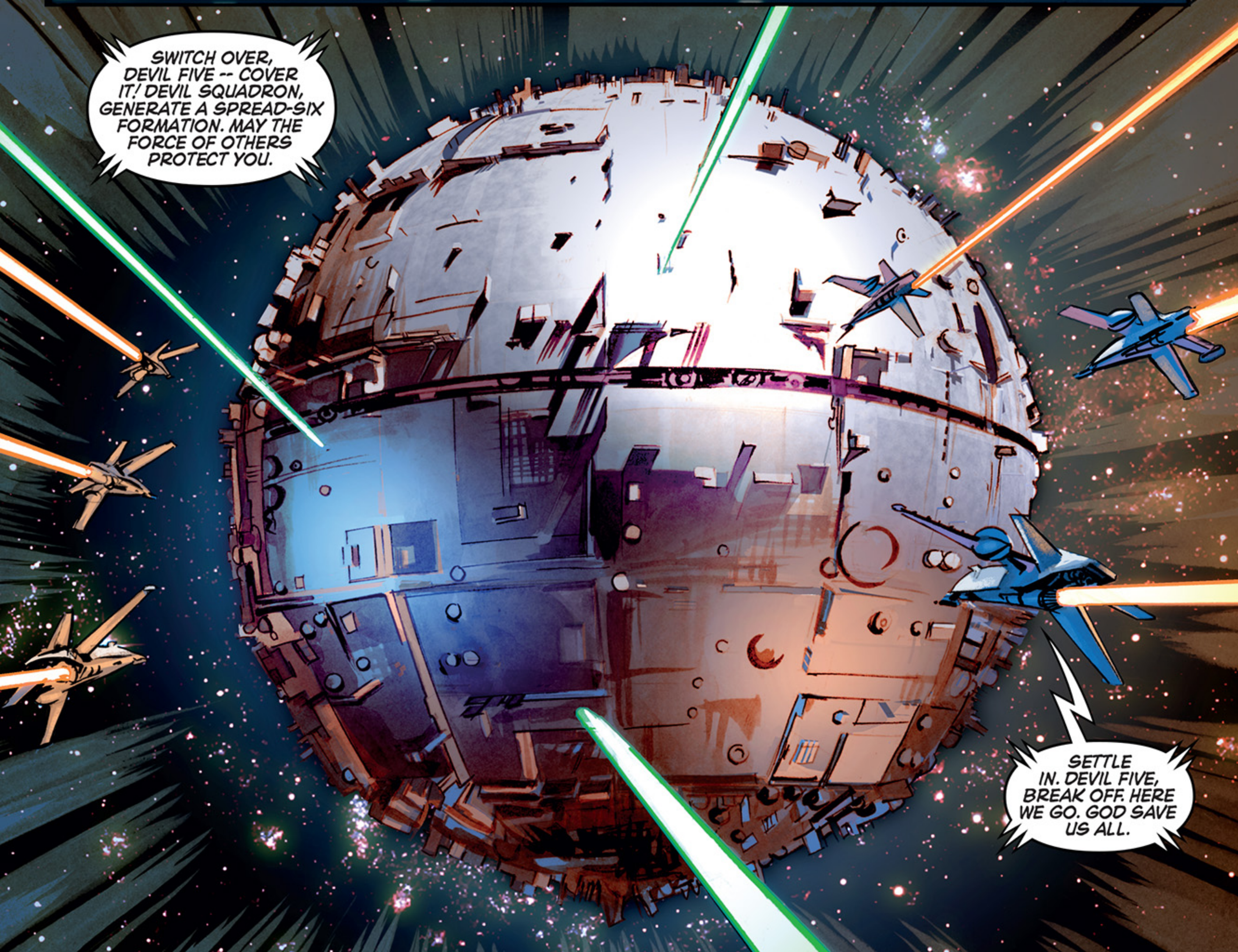
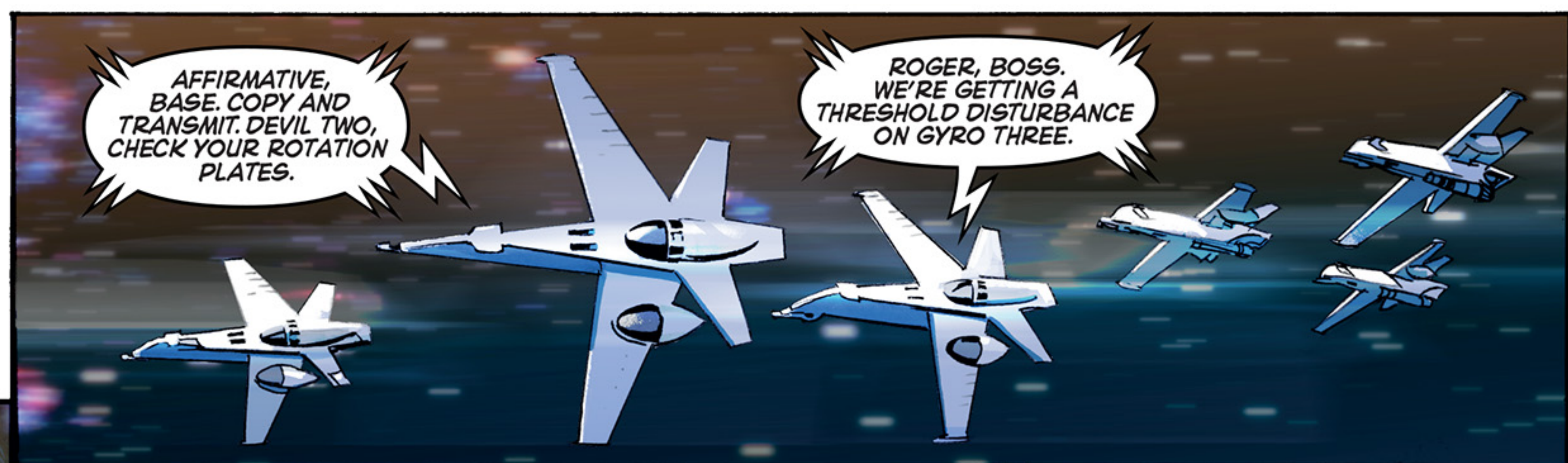
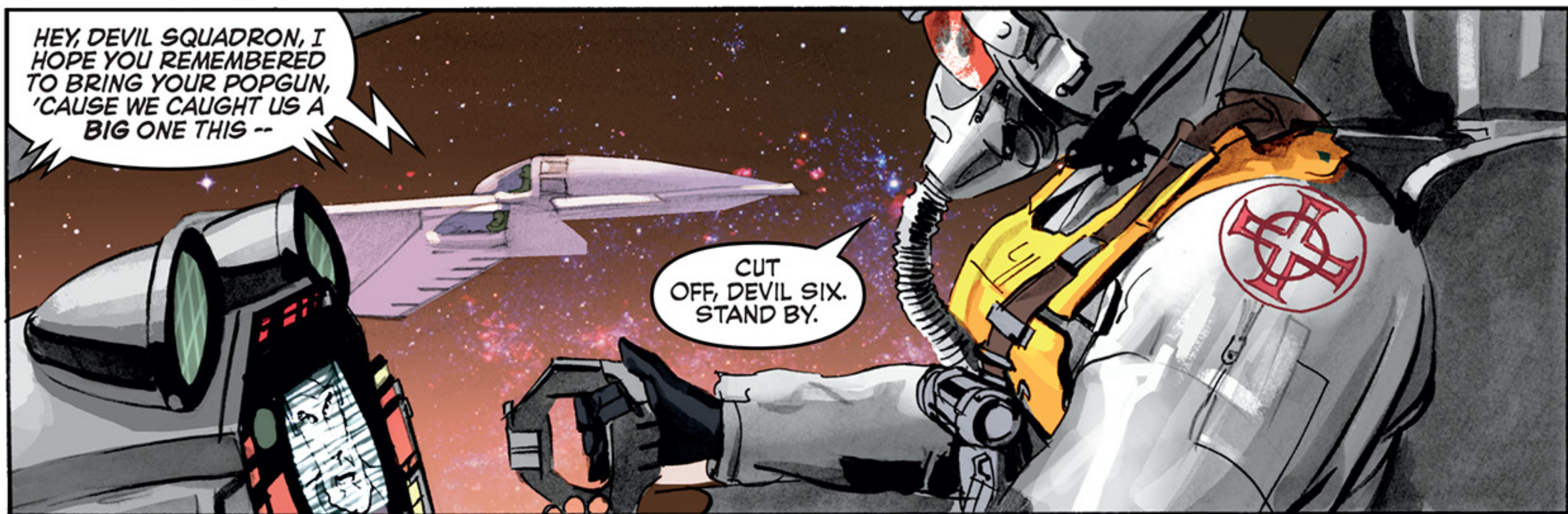
-- DRIVER,
GET US BACK
TO CALVAS
IMMEDIATELY!

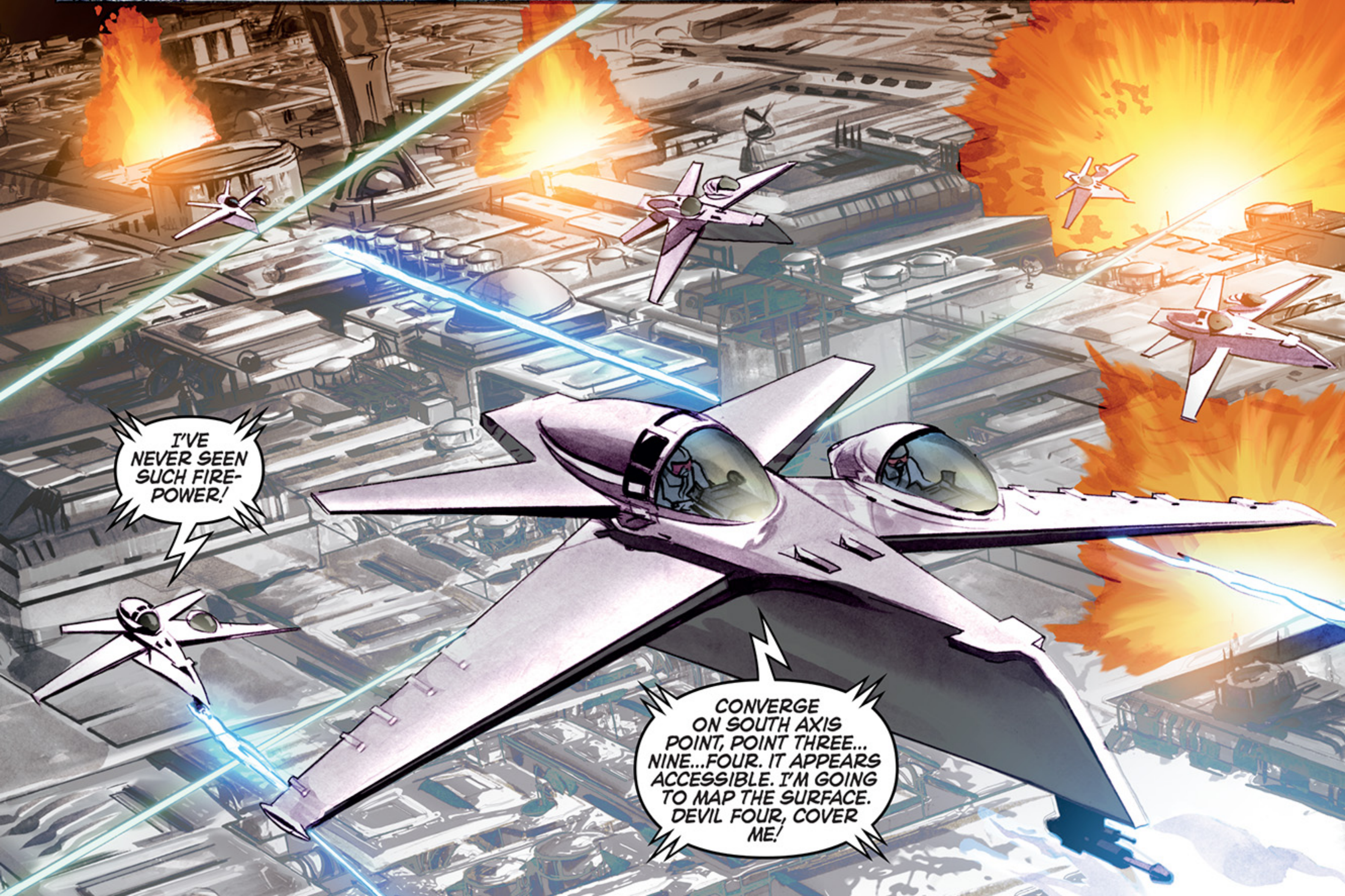


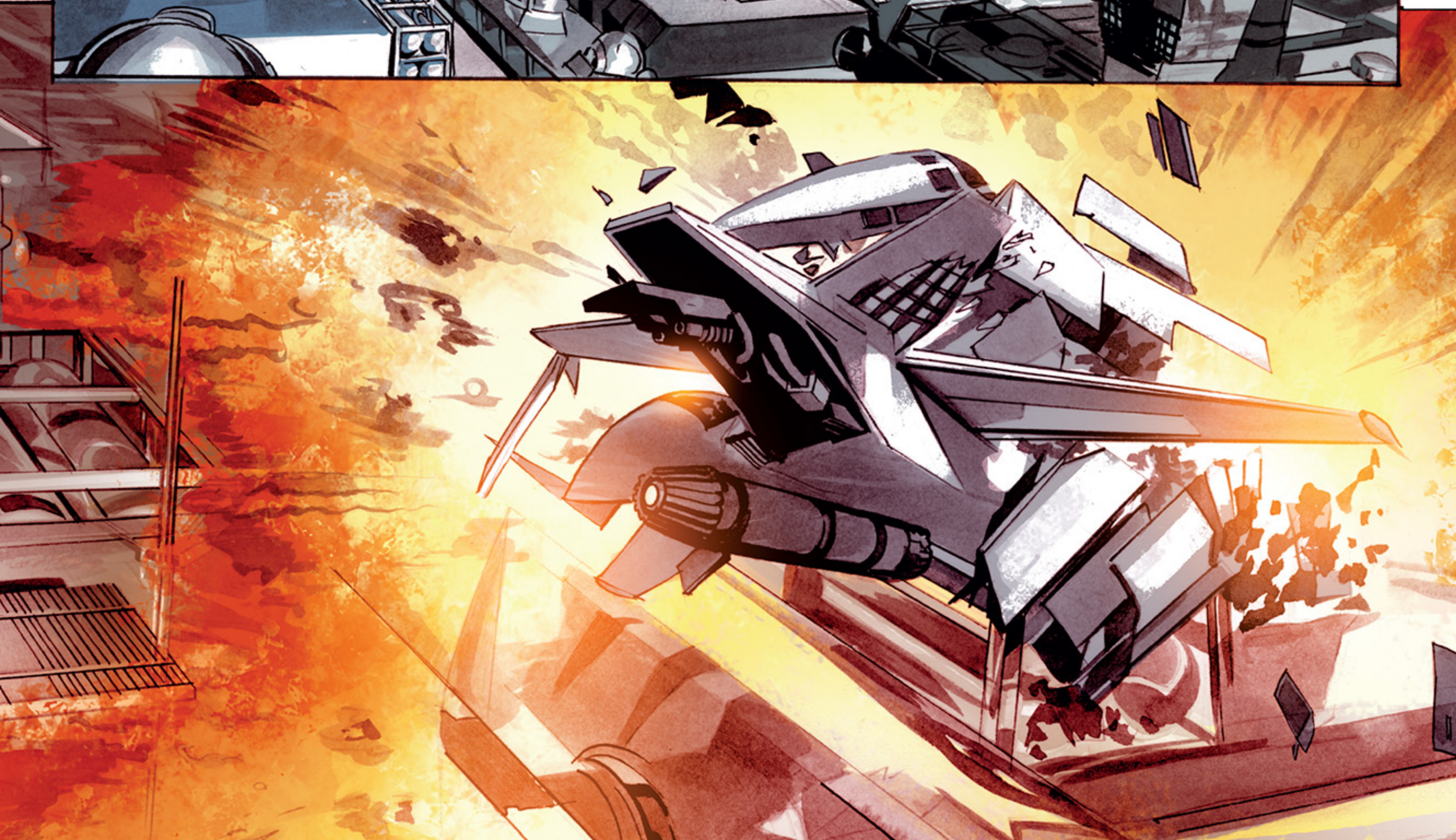
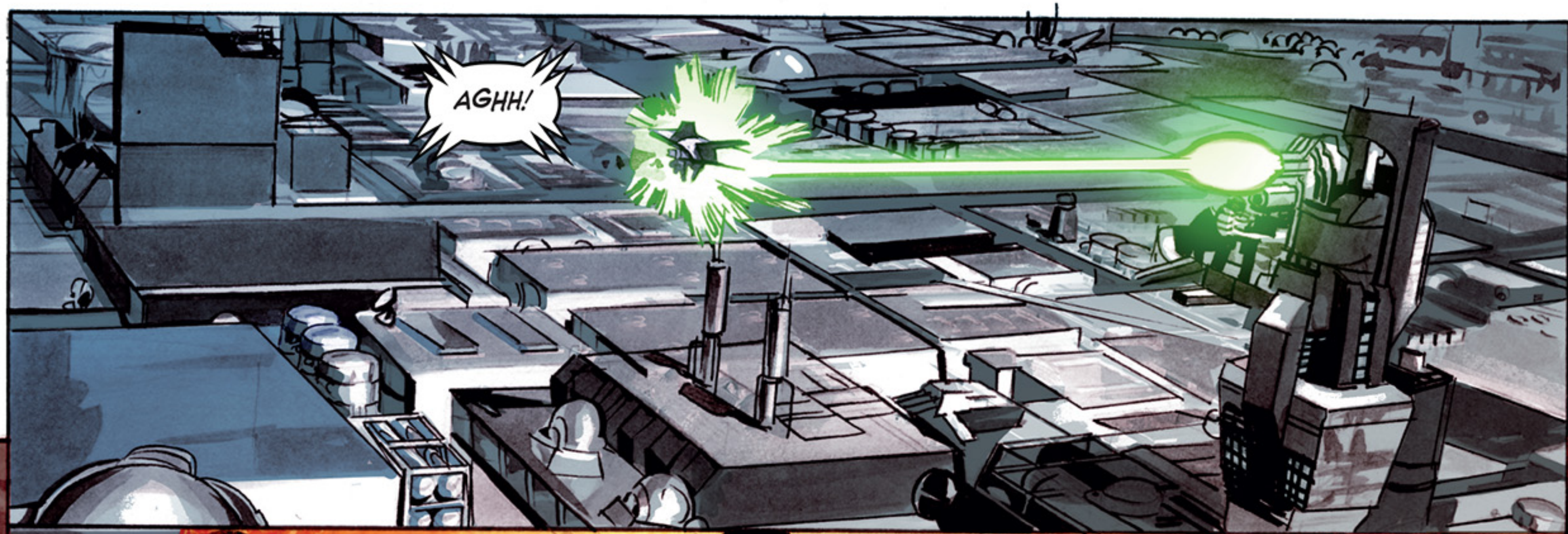
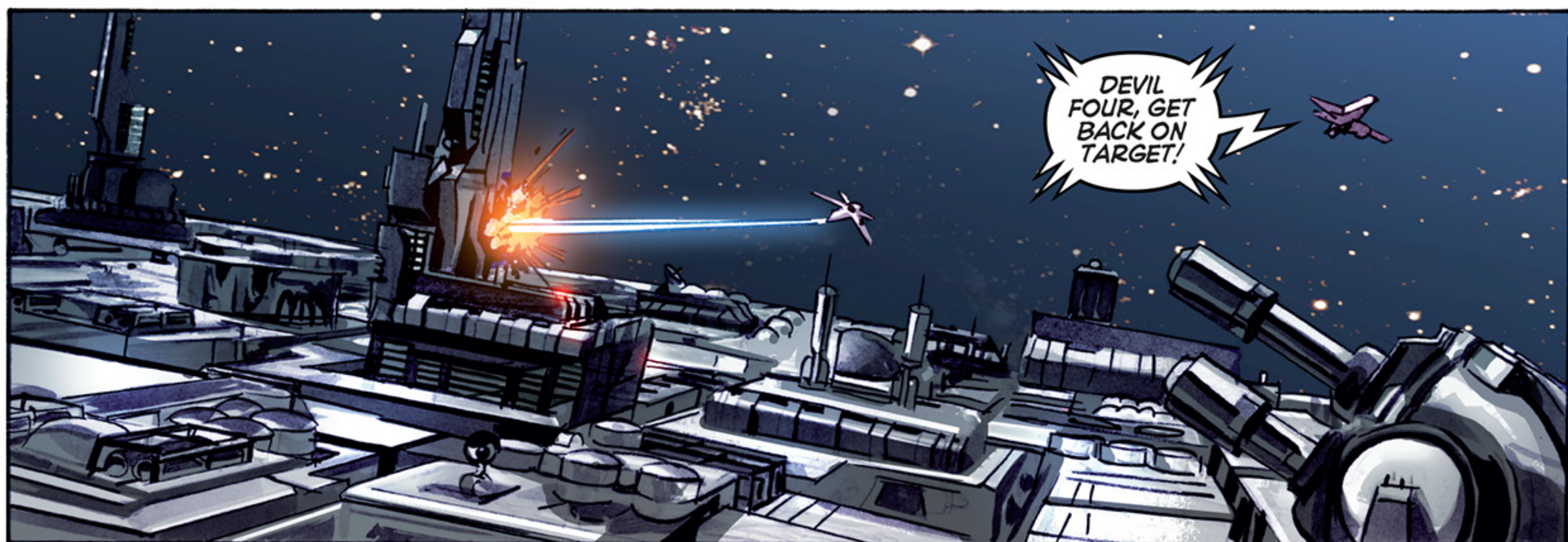
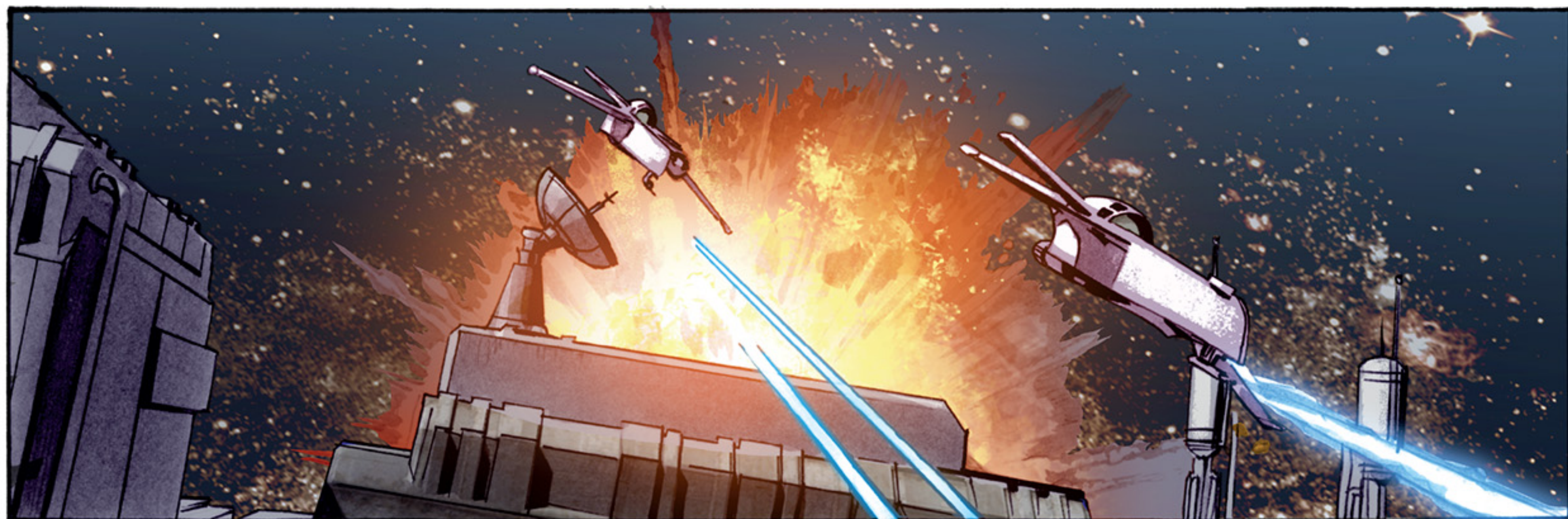
AQUILAE. SPACEPORT OUTPOST,
IN THE CITY OF GORDON.

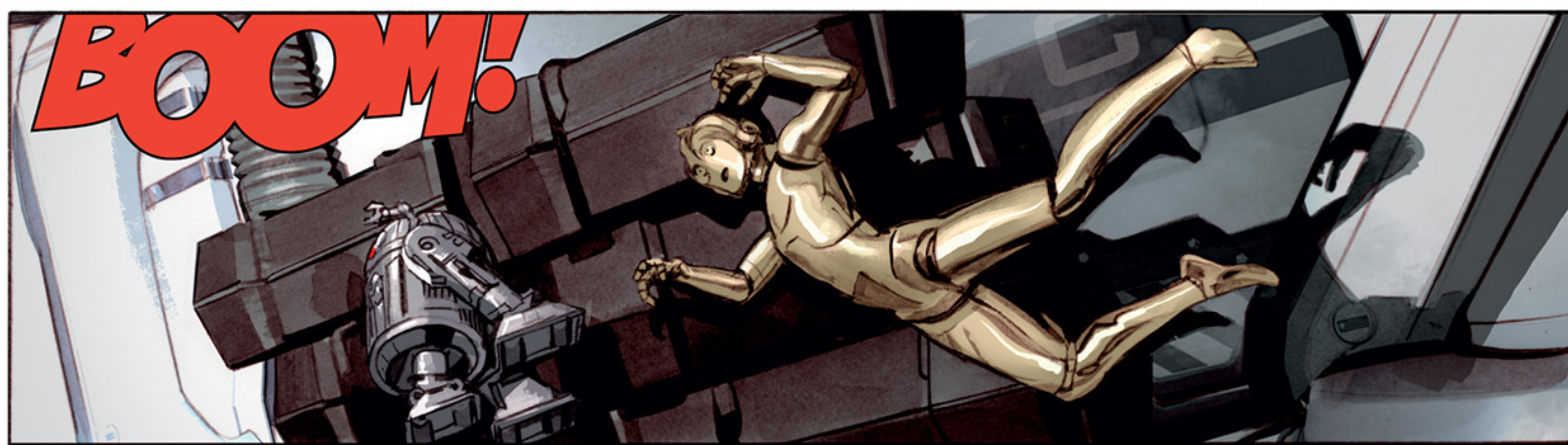
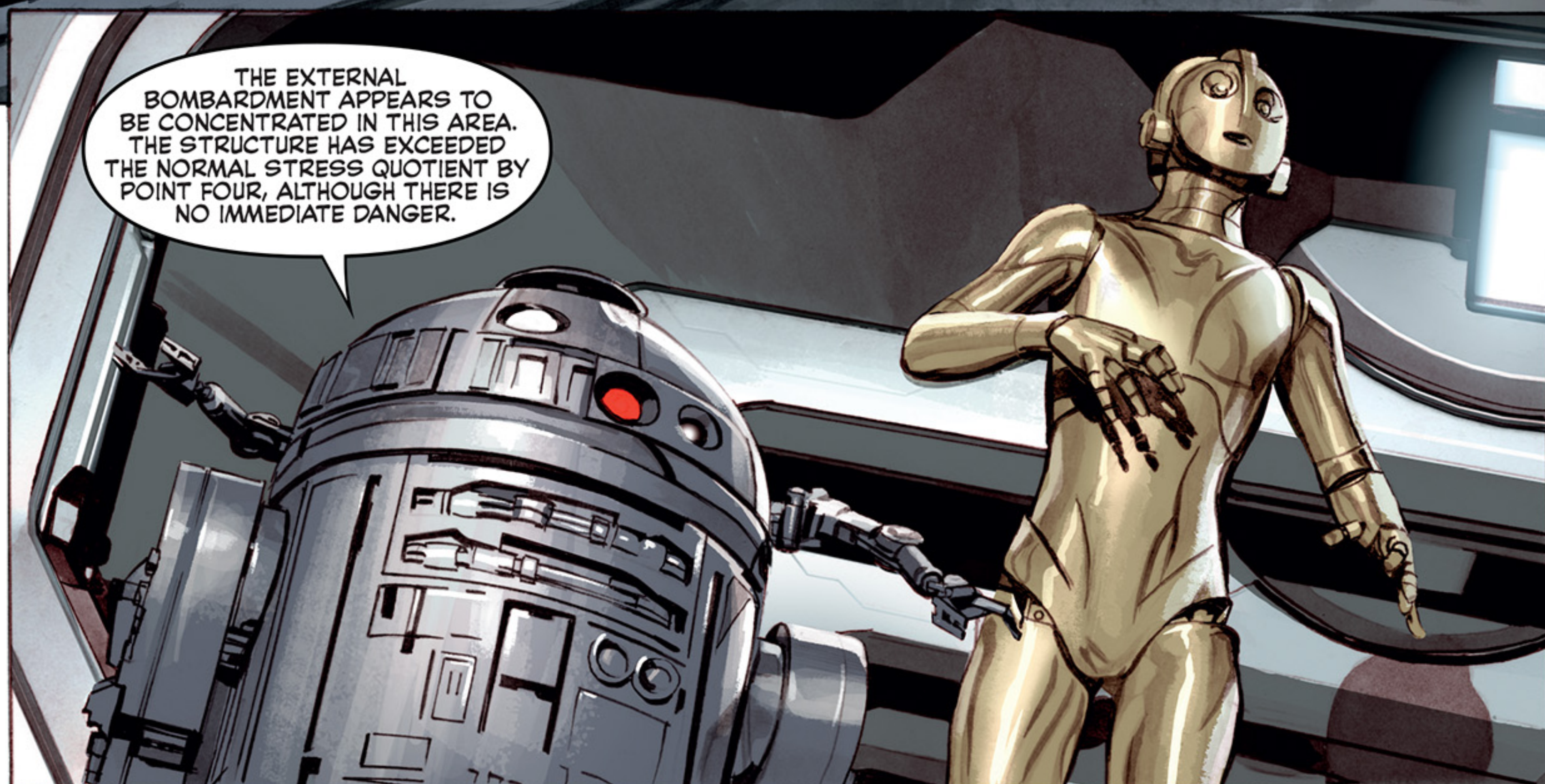
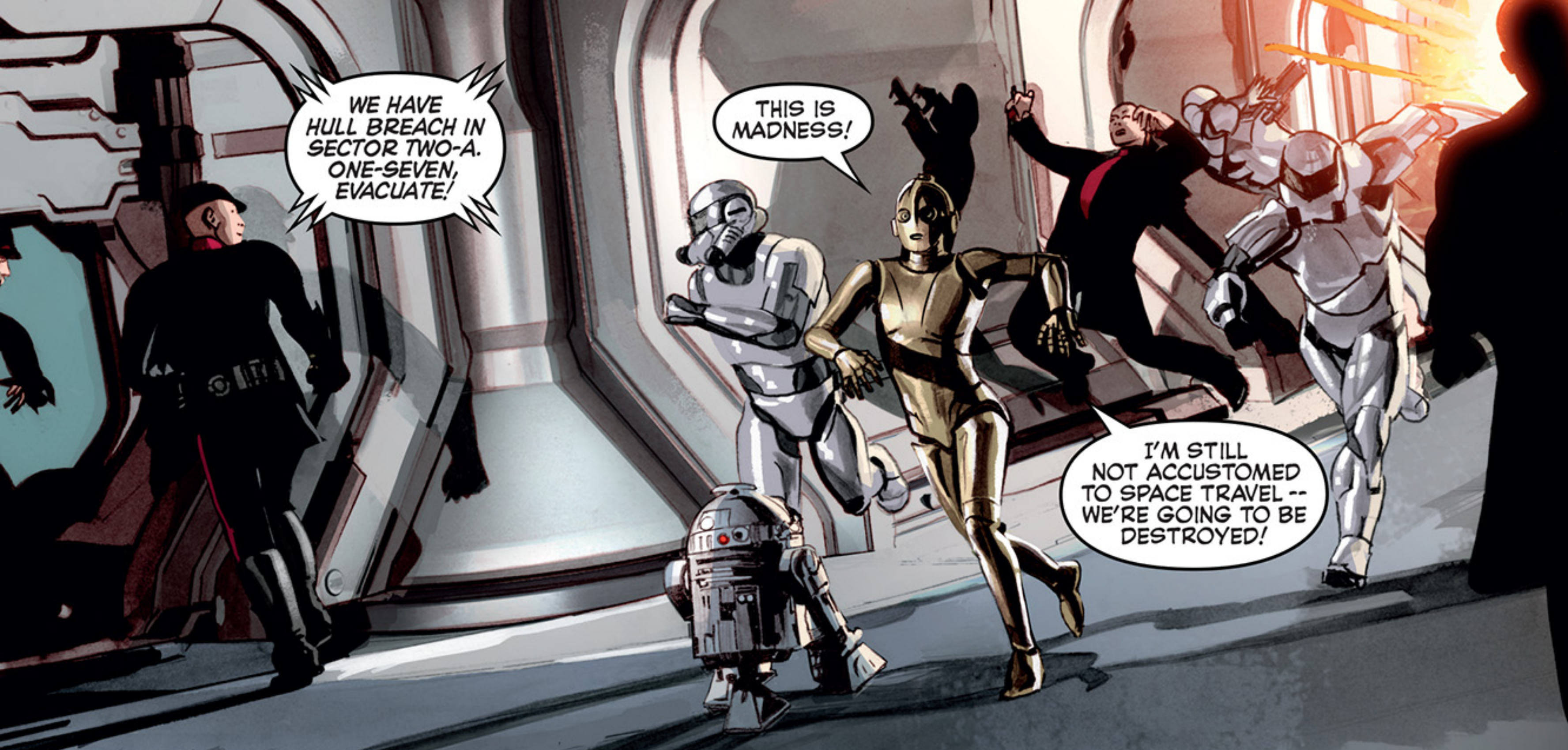


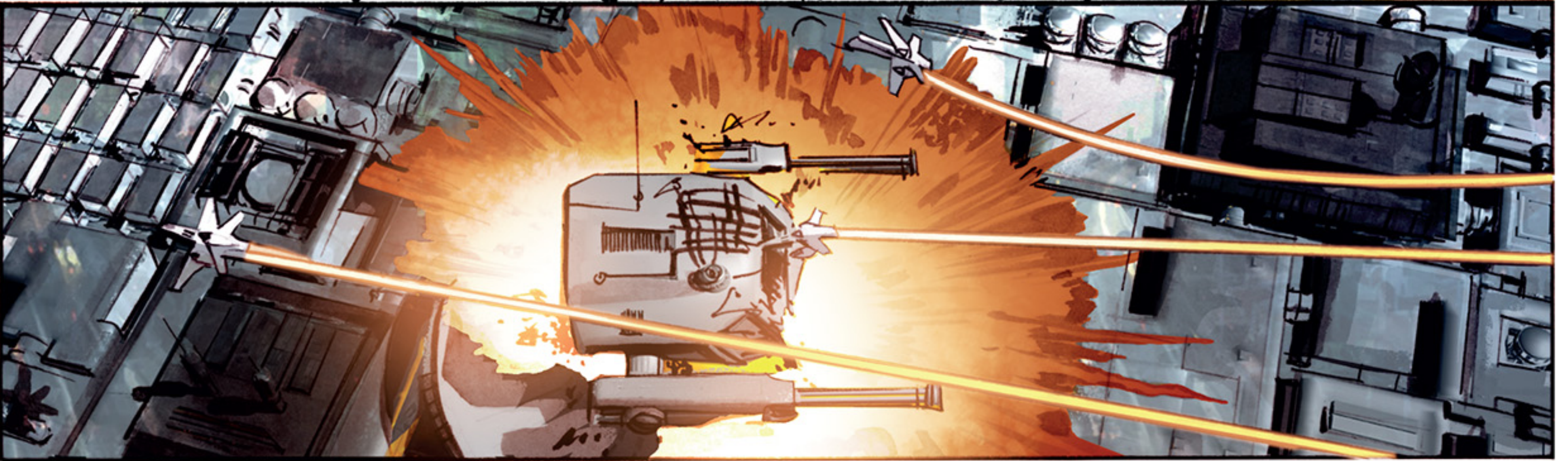
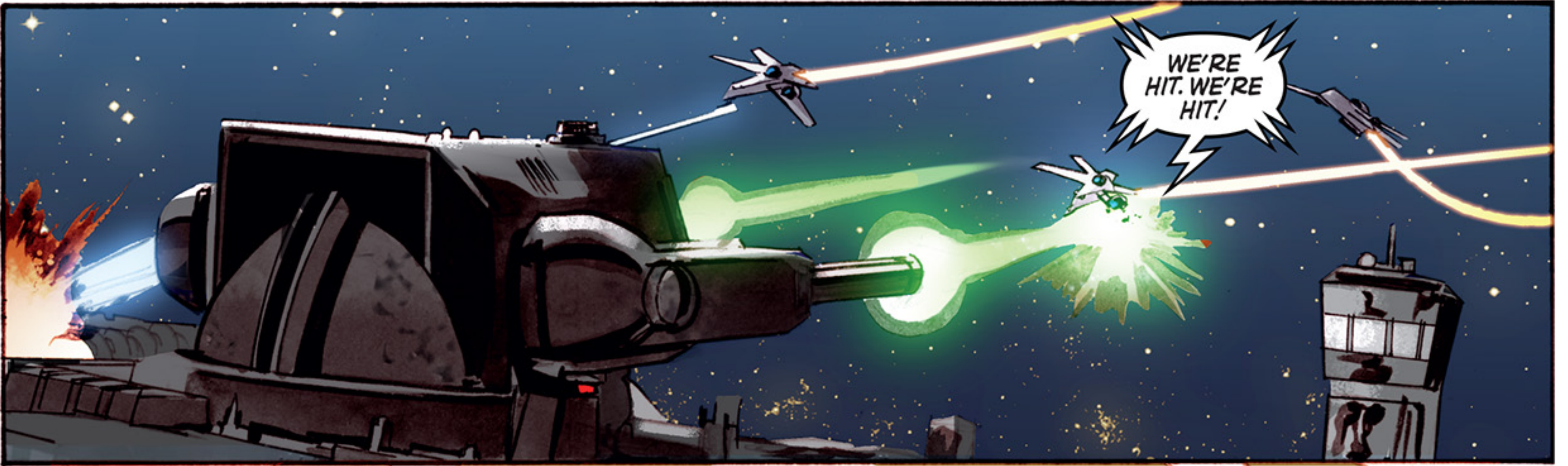
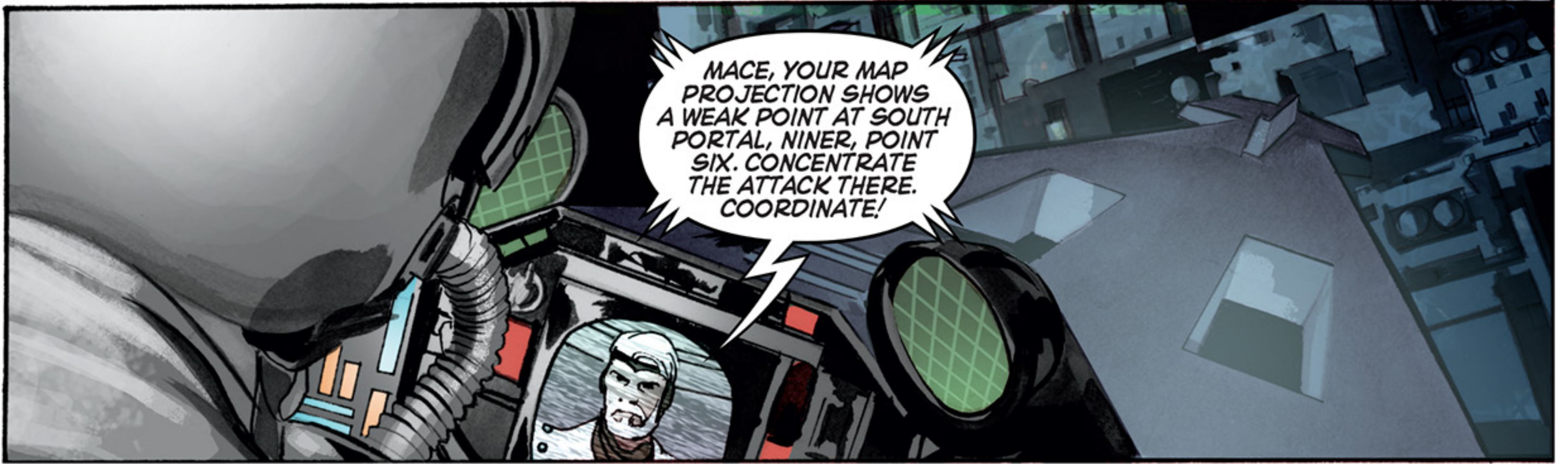
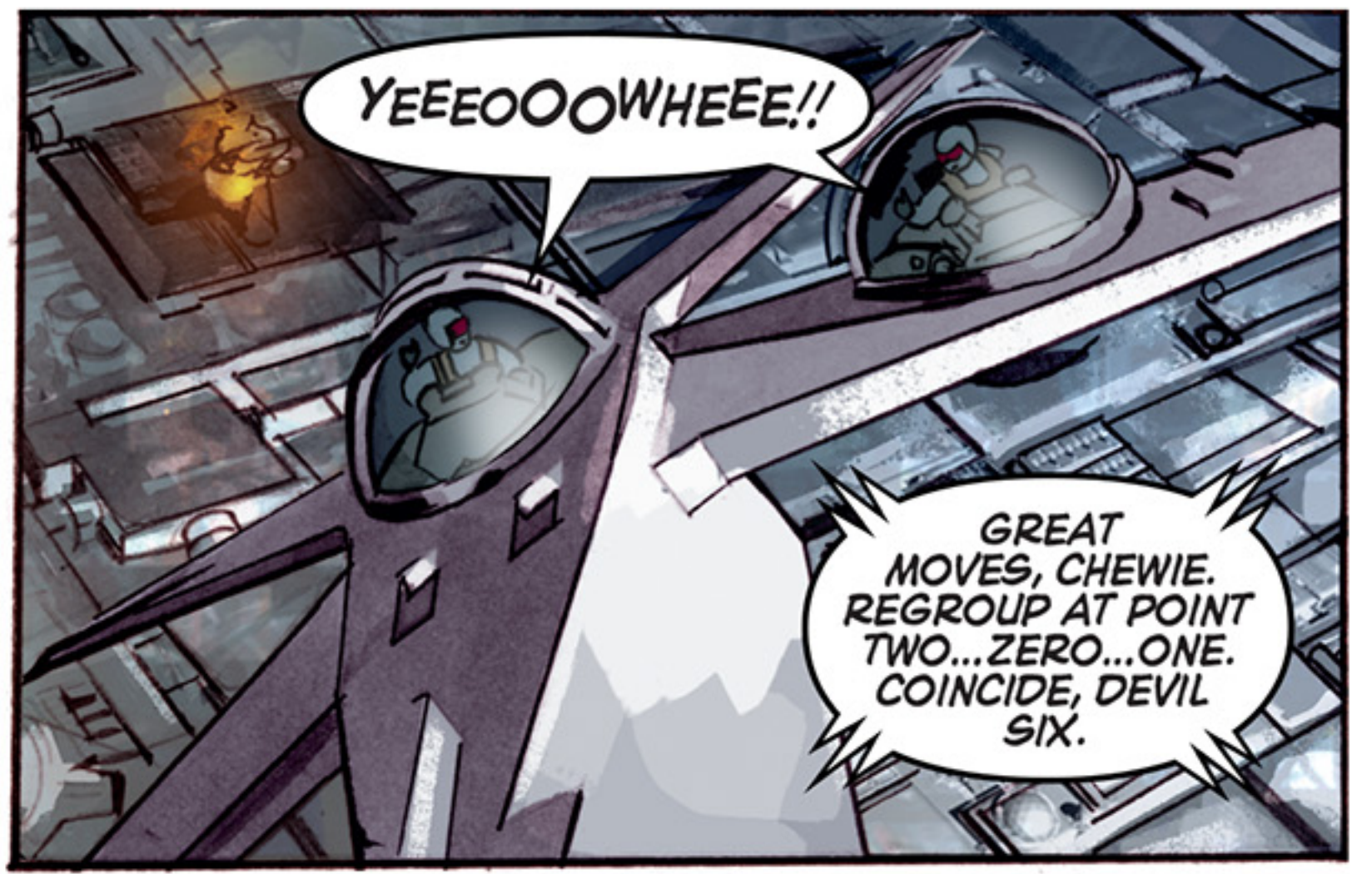
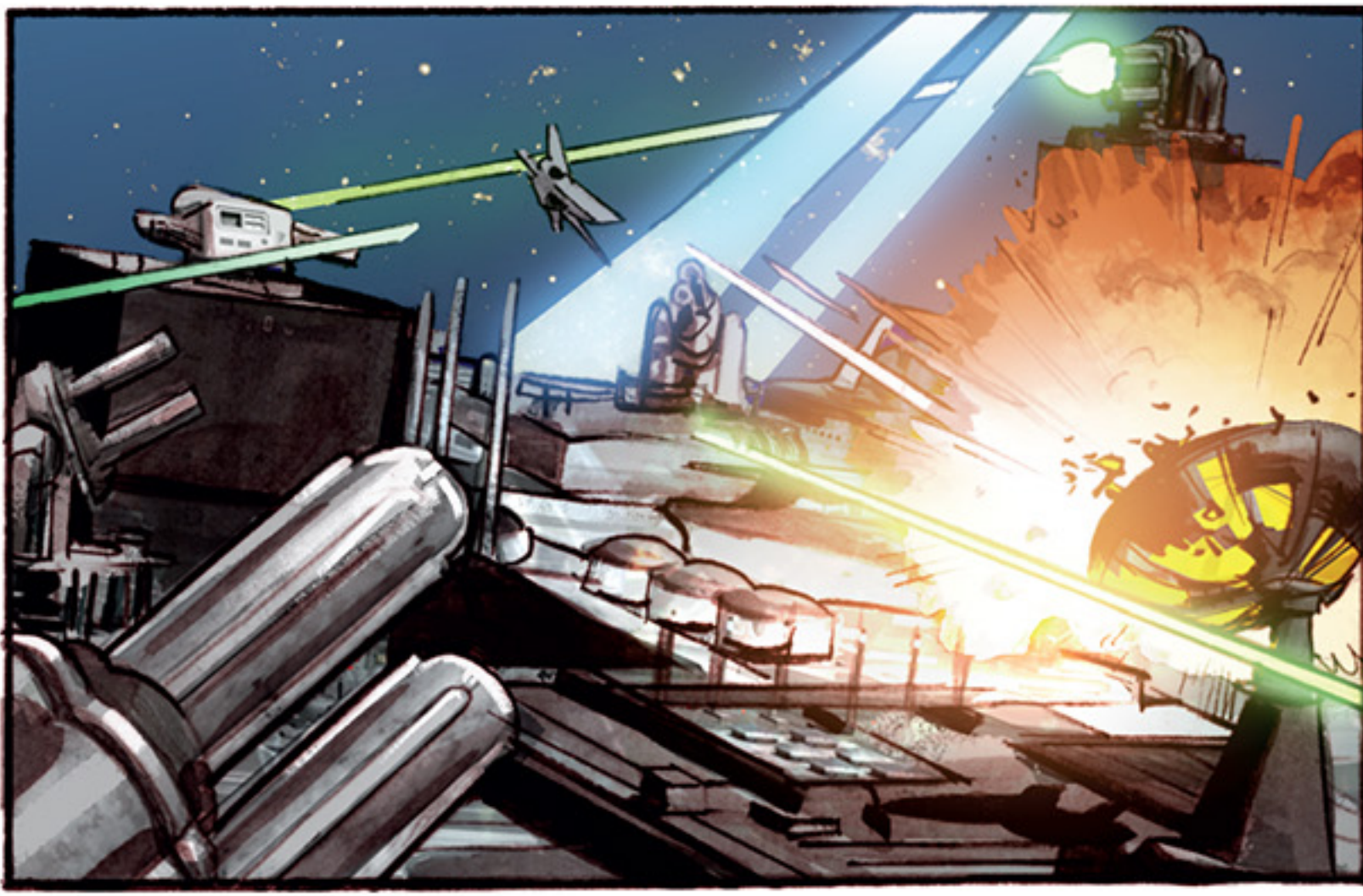


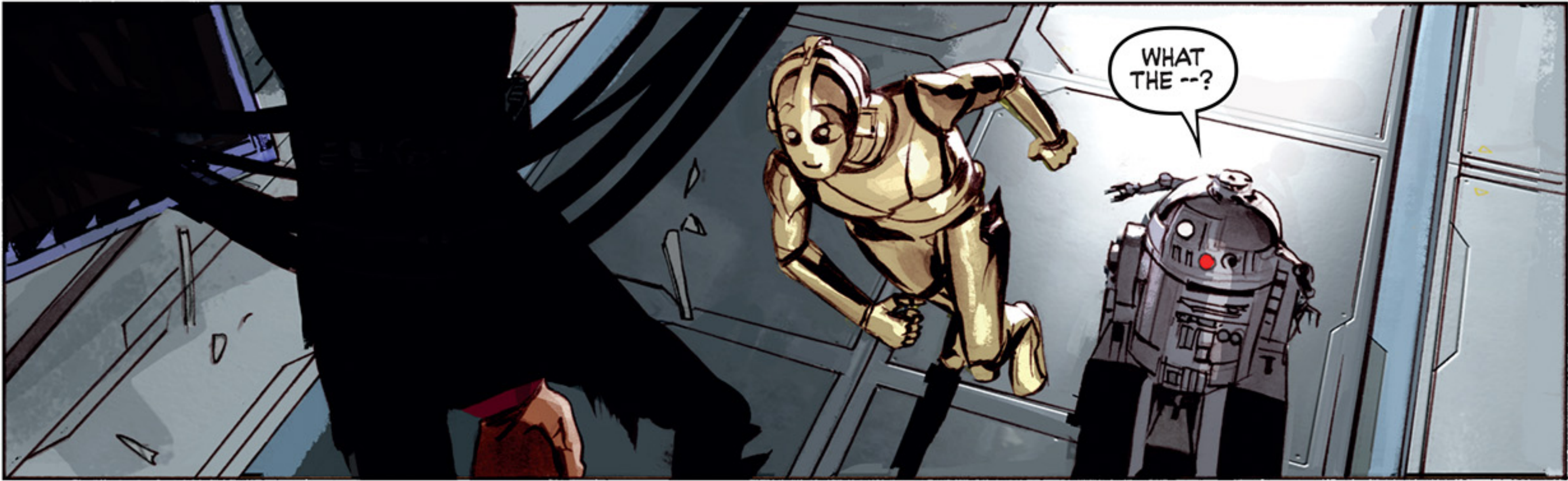
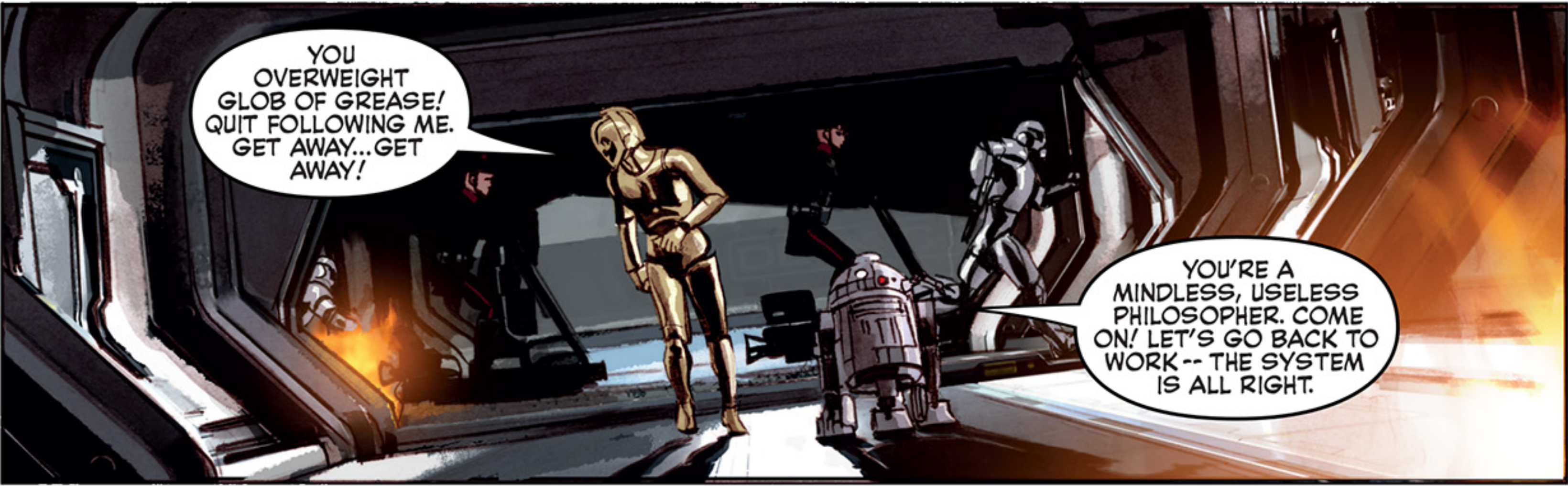




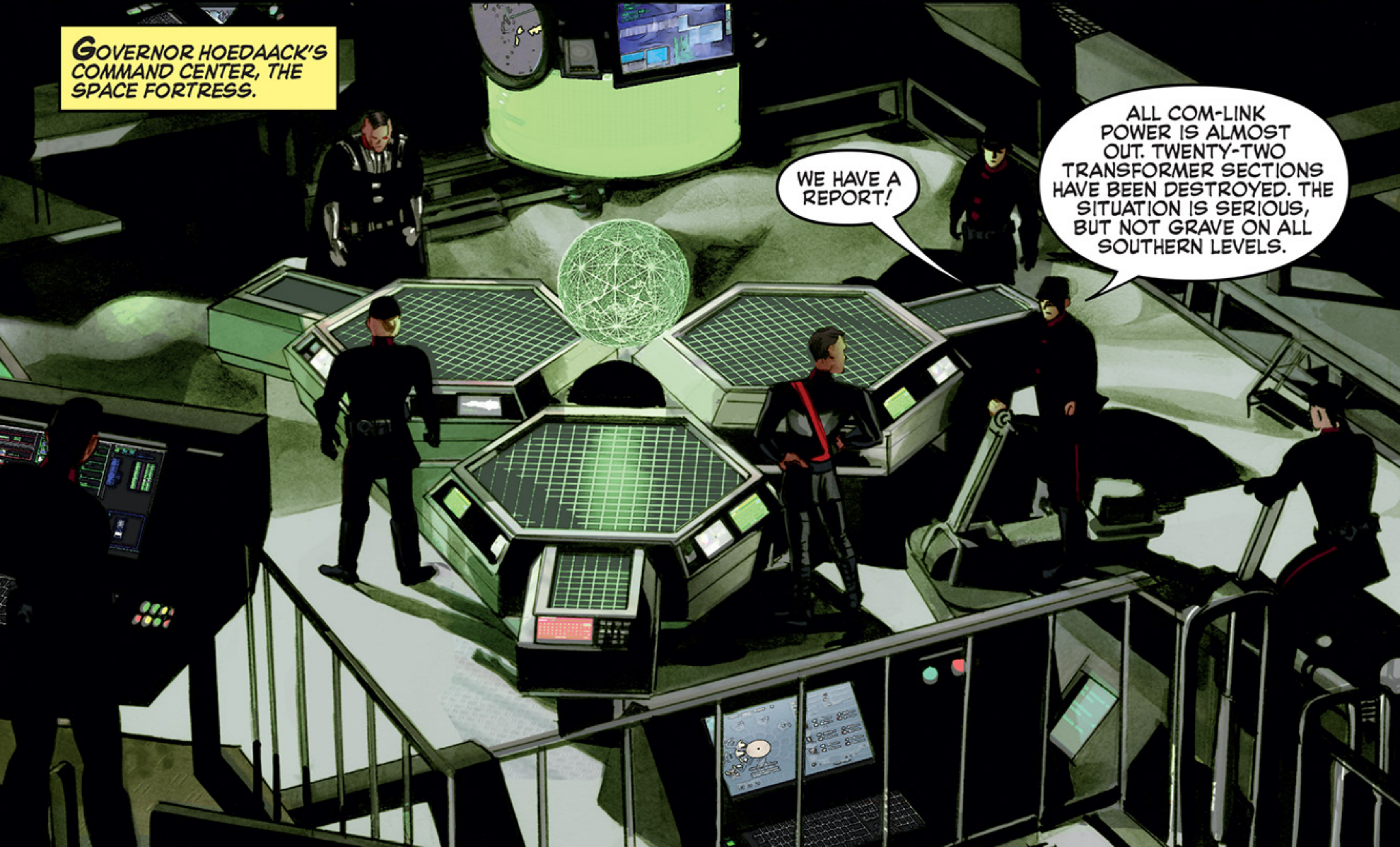


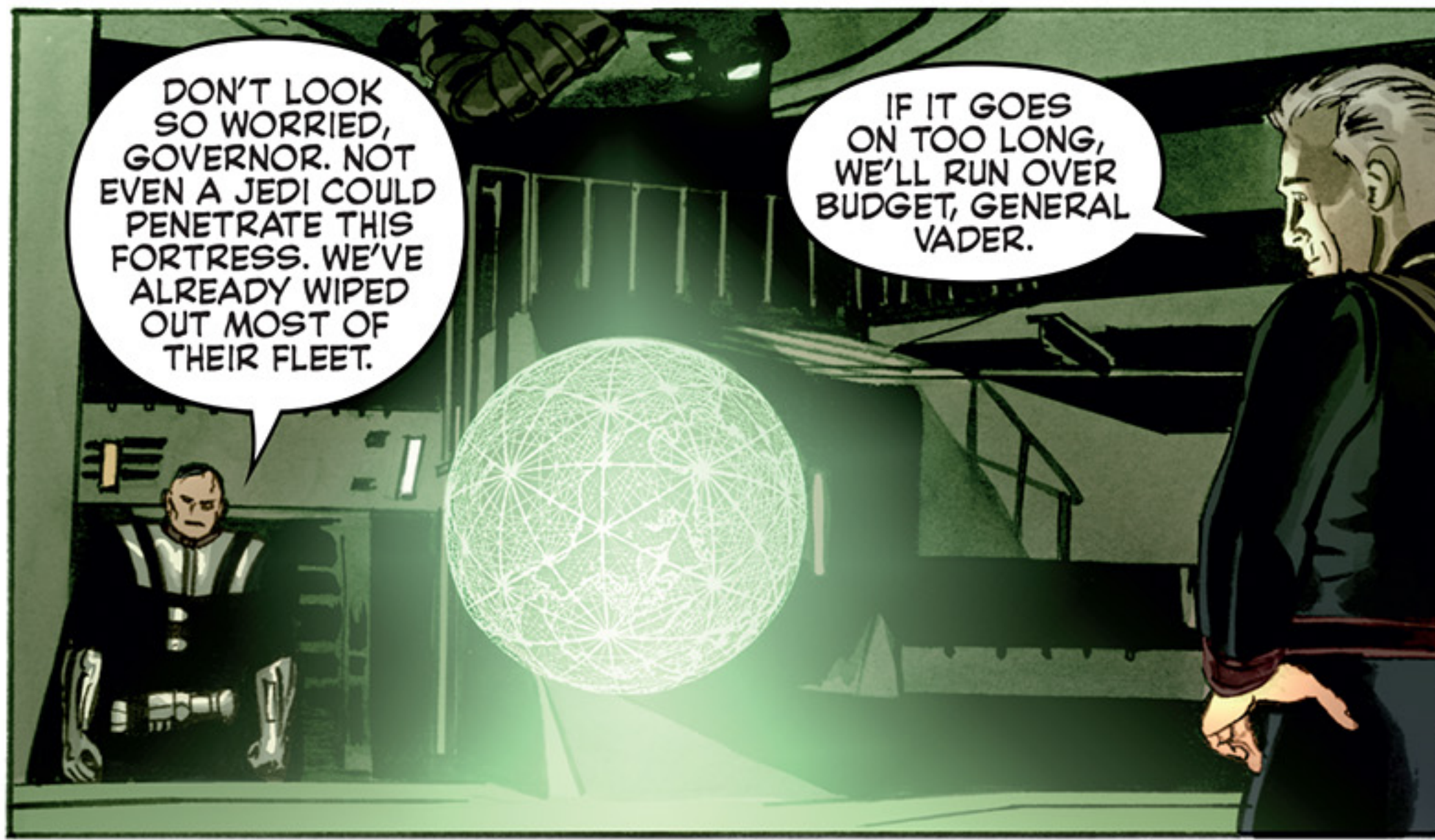


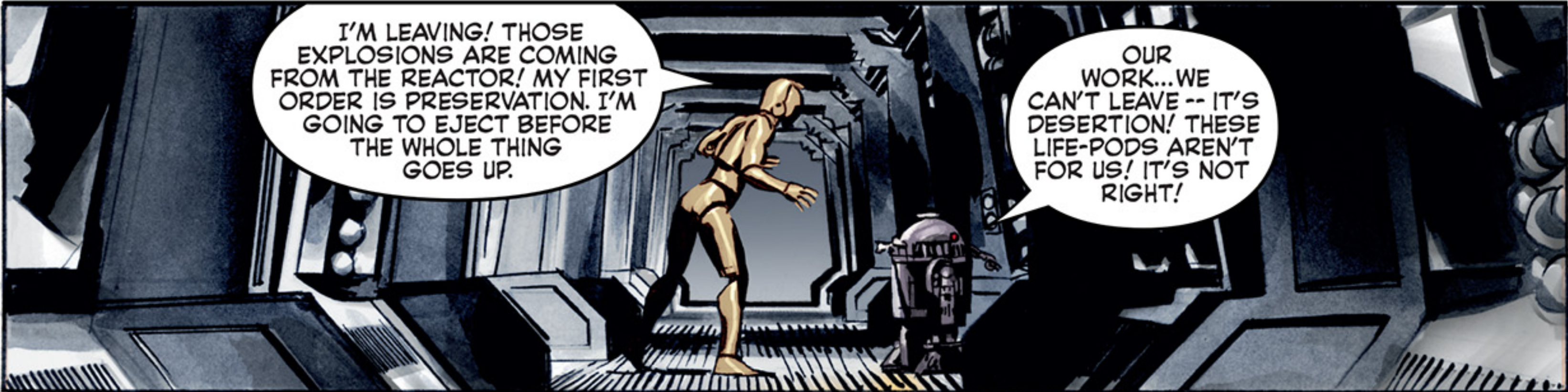
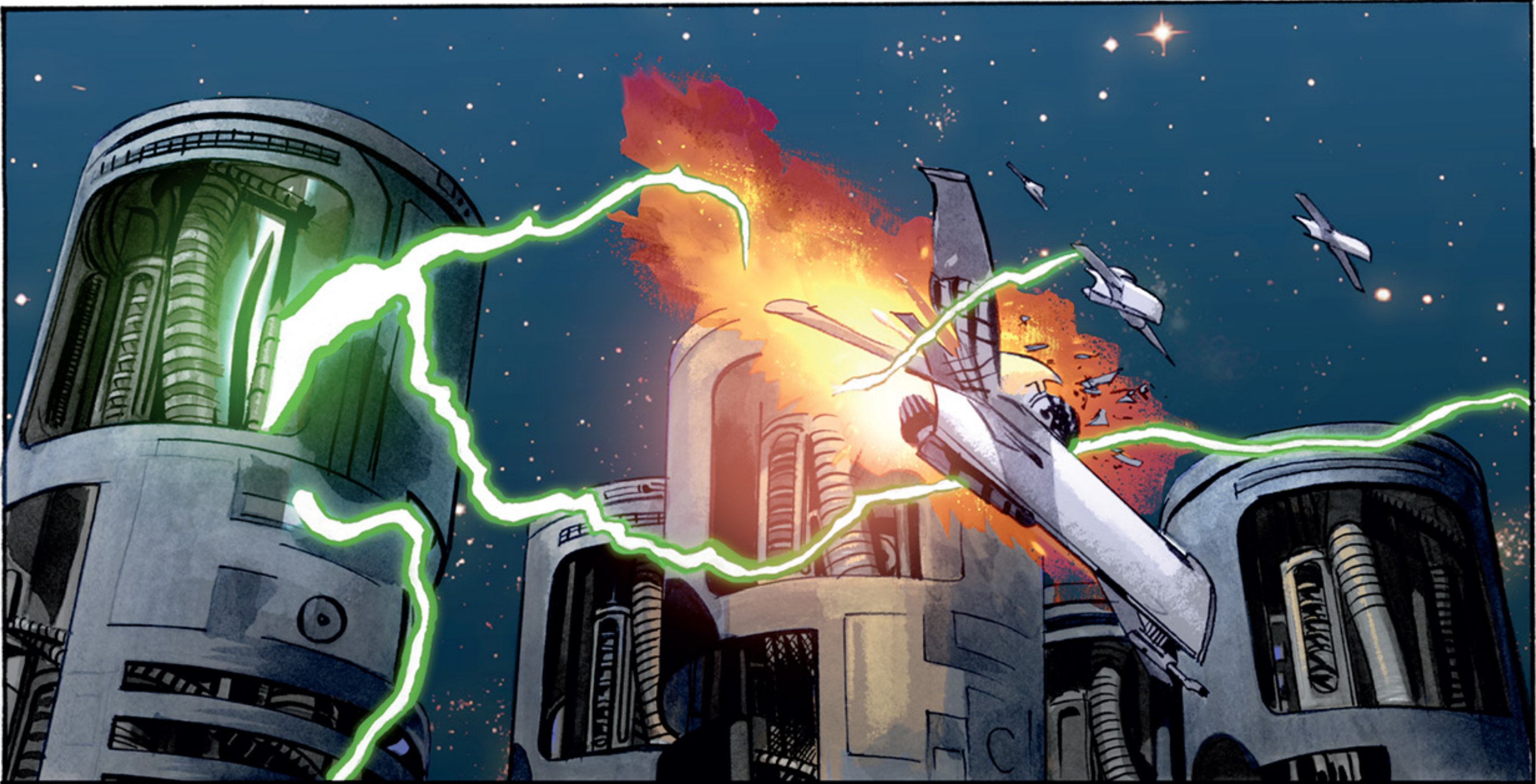


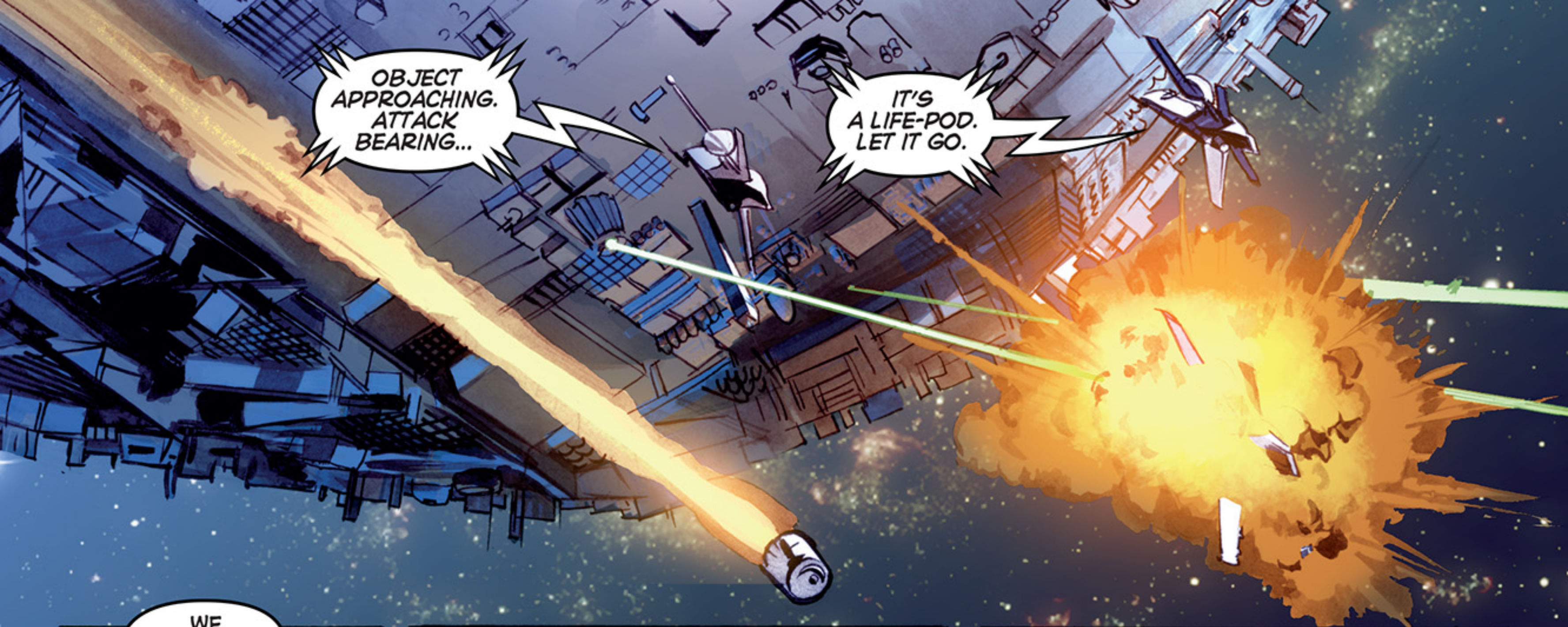


**GOVERNOR HOEDAACK'S
COMMAND CENTER, THE
SPACE FORTRESS.**







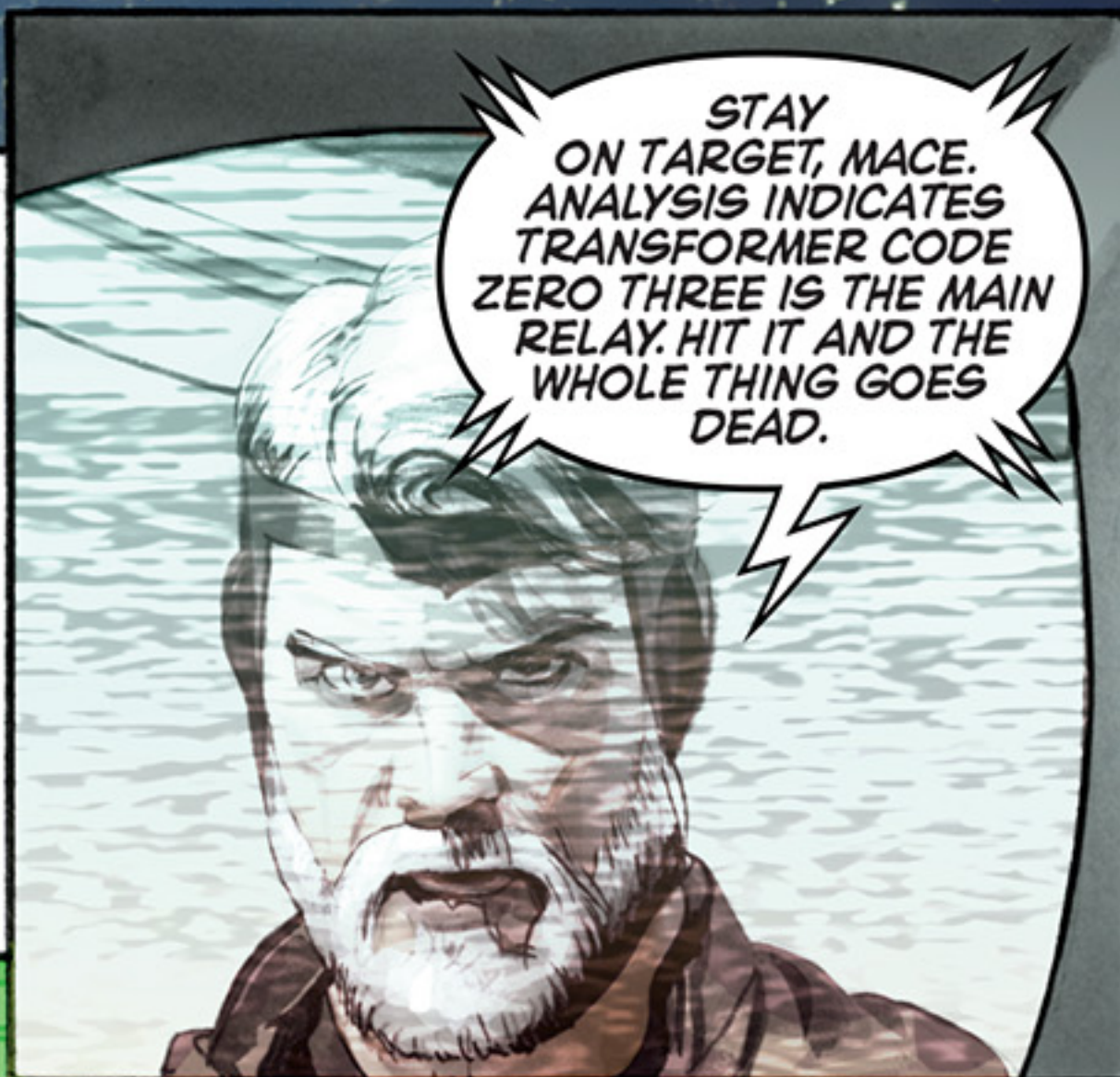


OBJECT APPROACHING.
ATTACK BEARING...

IT'S
A LIFE-POD.
LET IT GO.



WE
JUST LOST
DEVIL SIX...



STAY
ON TARGET, MACE.
ANALYSIS INDICATES
TRANSFORMER CODE
ZERO THREE IS THE MAIN
RELAY. HIT IT AND THE
WHOLE THING GOES
DEAD.



WE'RE
ON OUR
WAY.

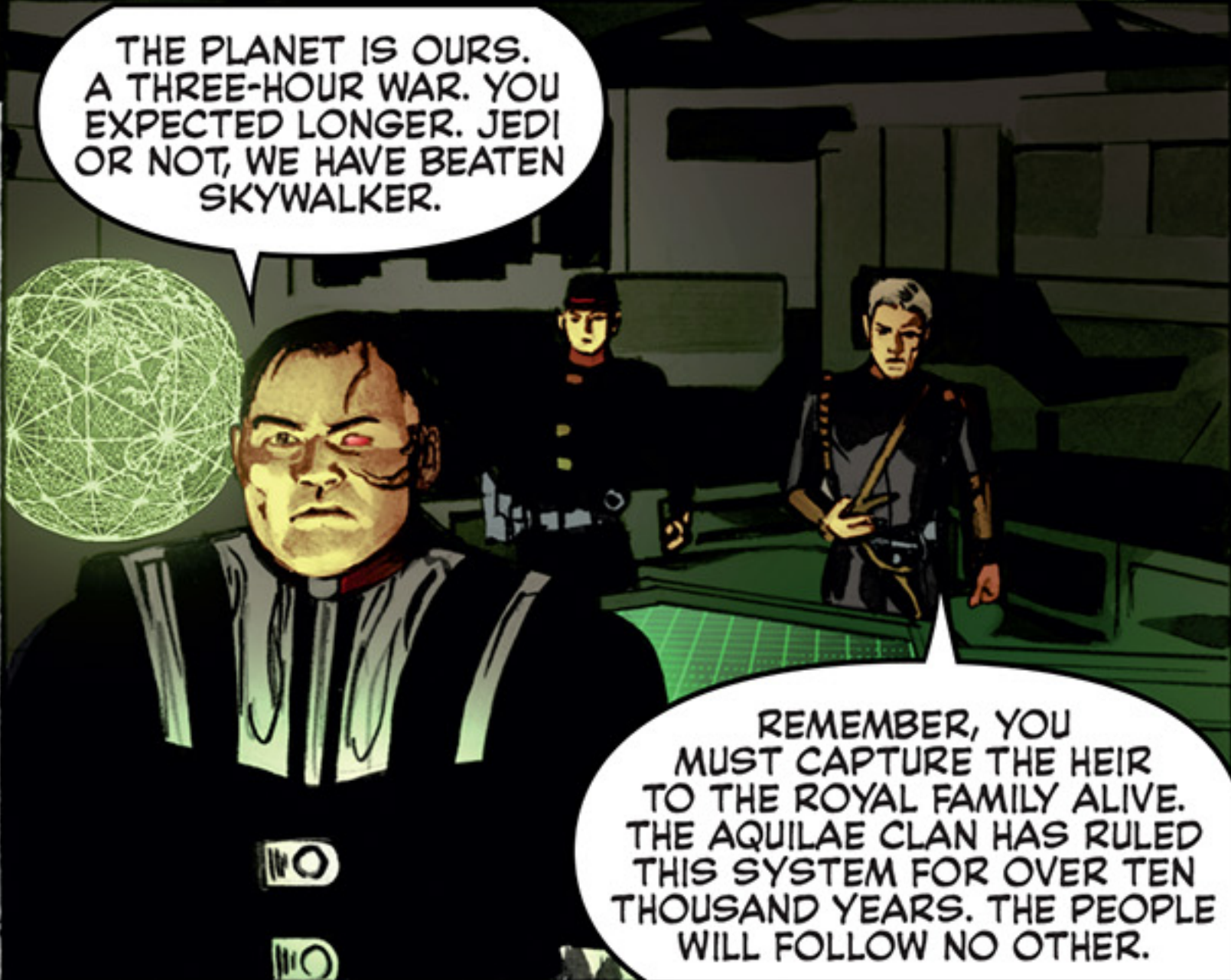
Classified
80% CUS
81.22 BG
65 TON
232 KP
Rediee

ONLY TWO
ENEMY CRAFT
REMAIN OPERATIVE. I
CALCULATE VICTORY
BY ZERO THREE
HUNDRED.



ALERT
THE INVASION
FORCES.

YES,
SIR!

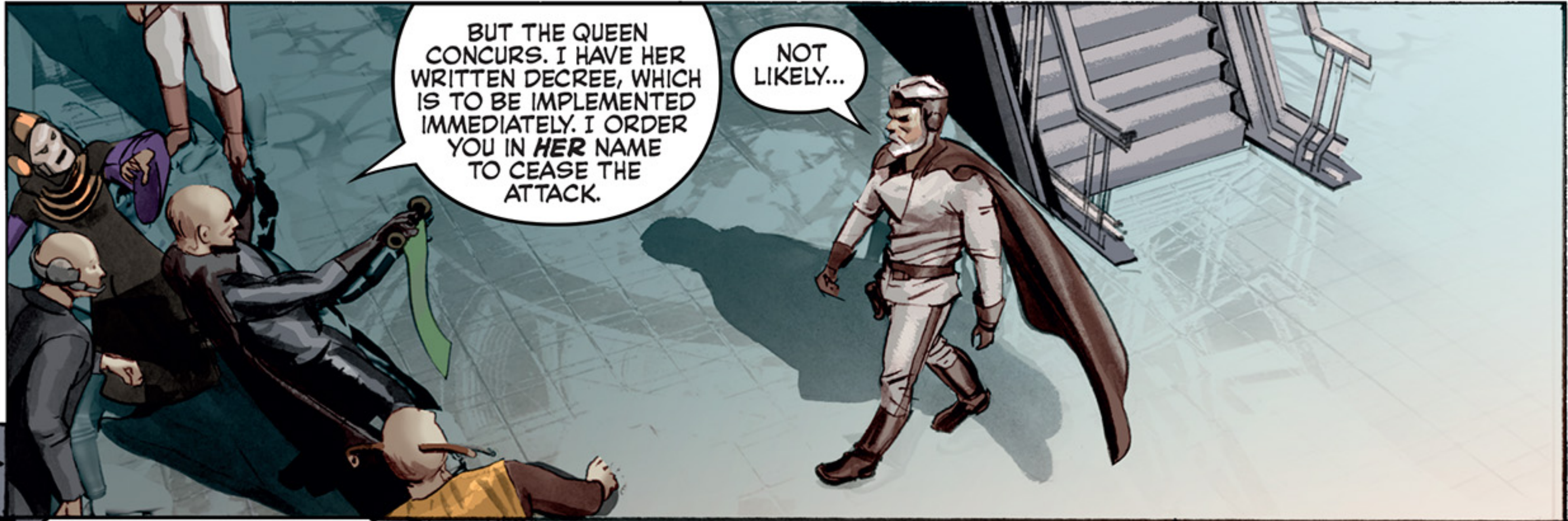
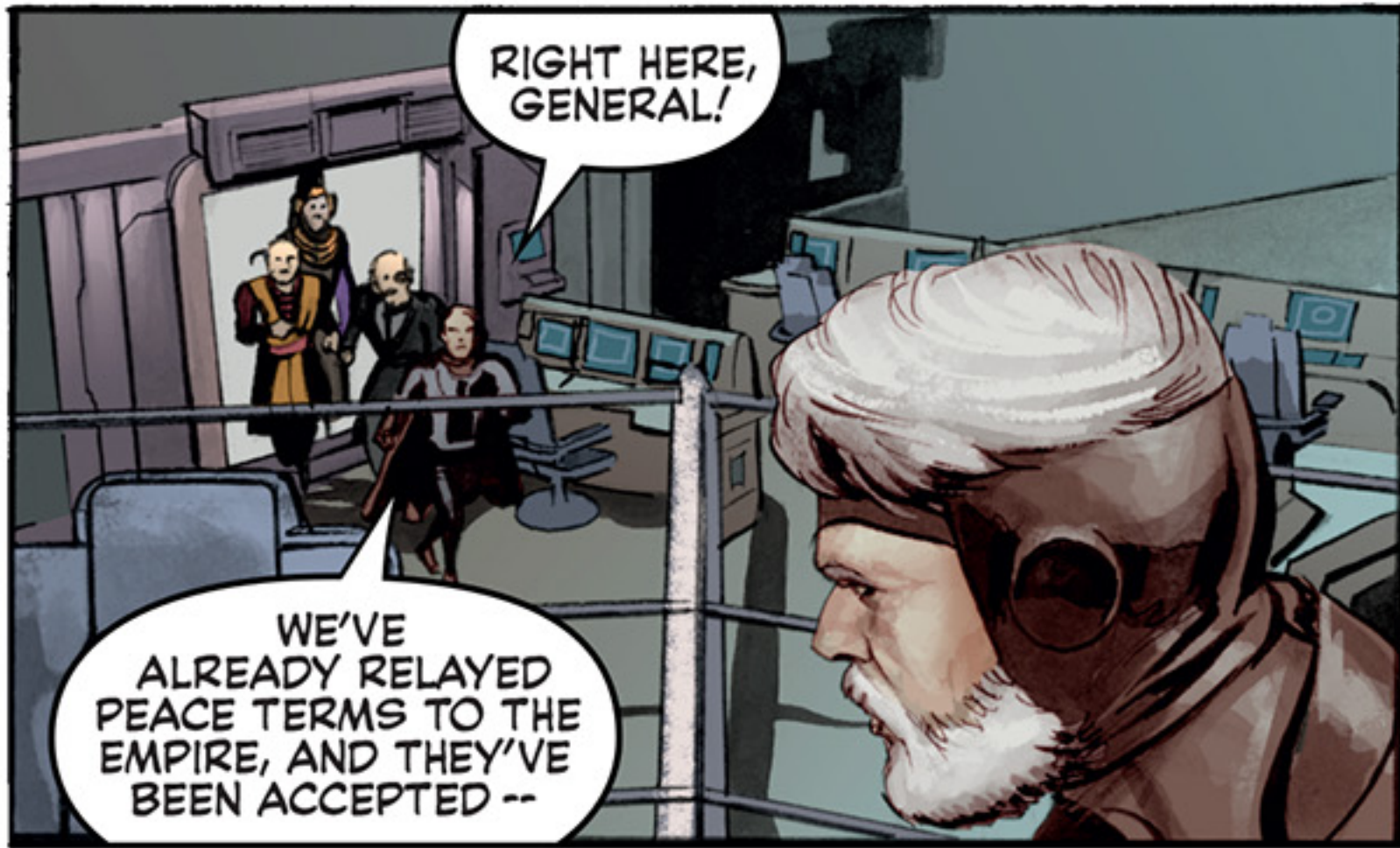
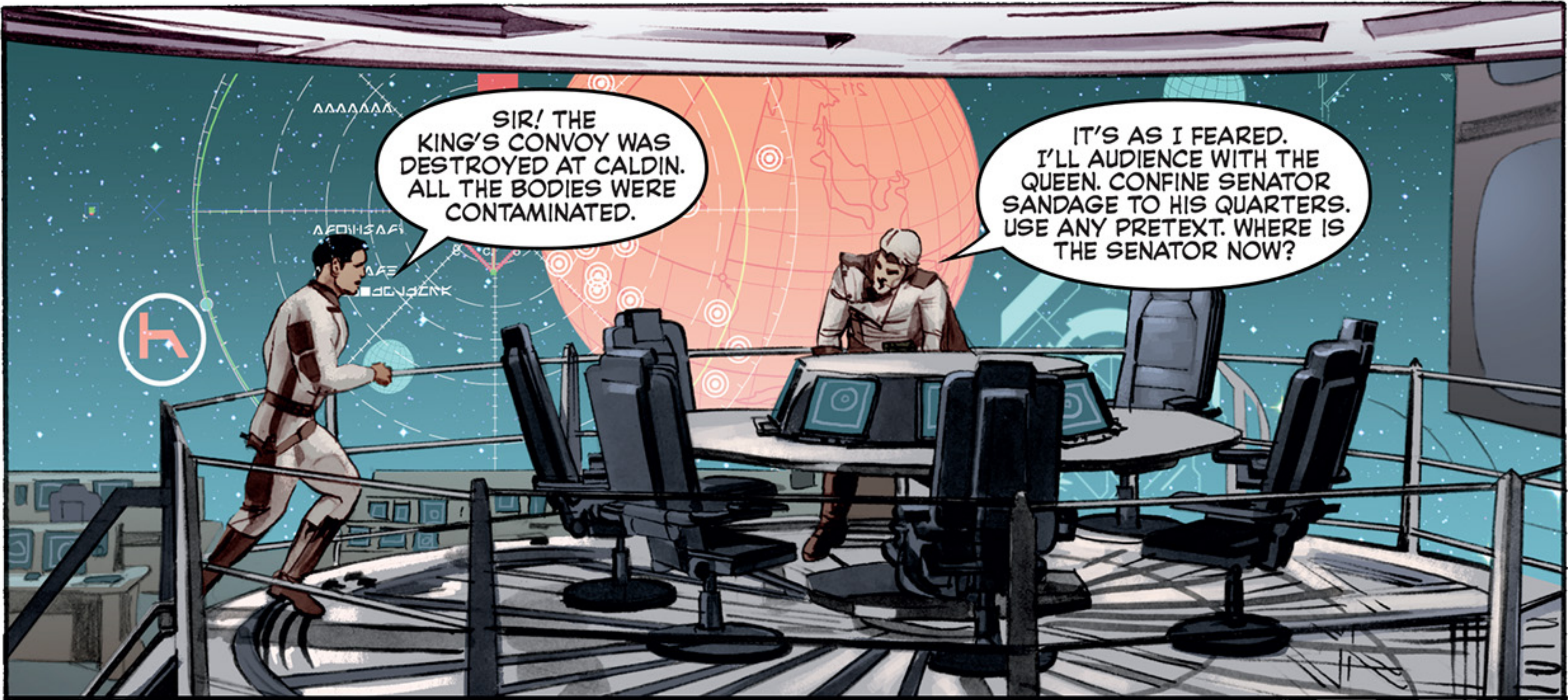


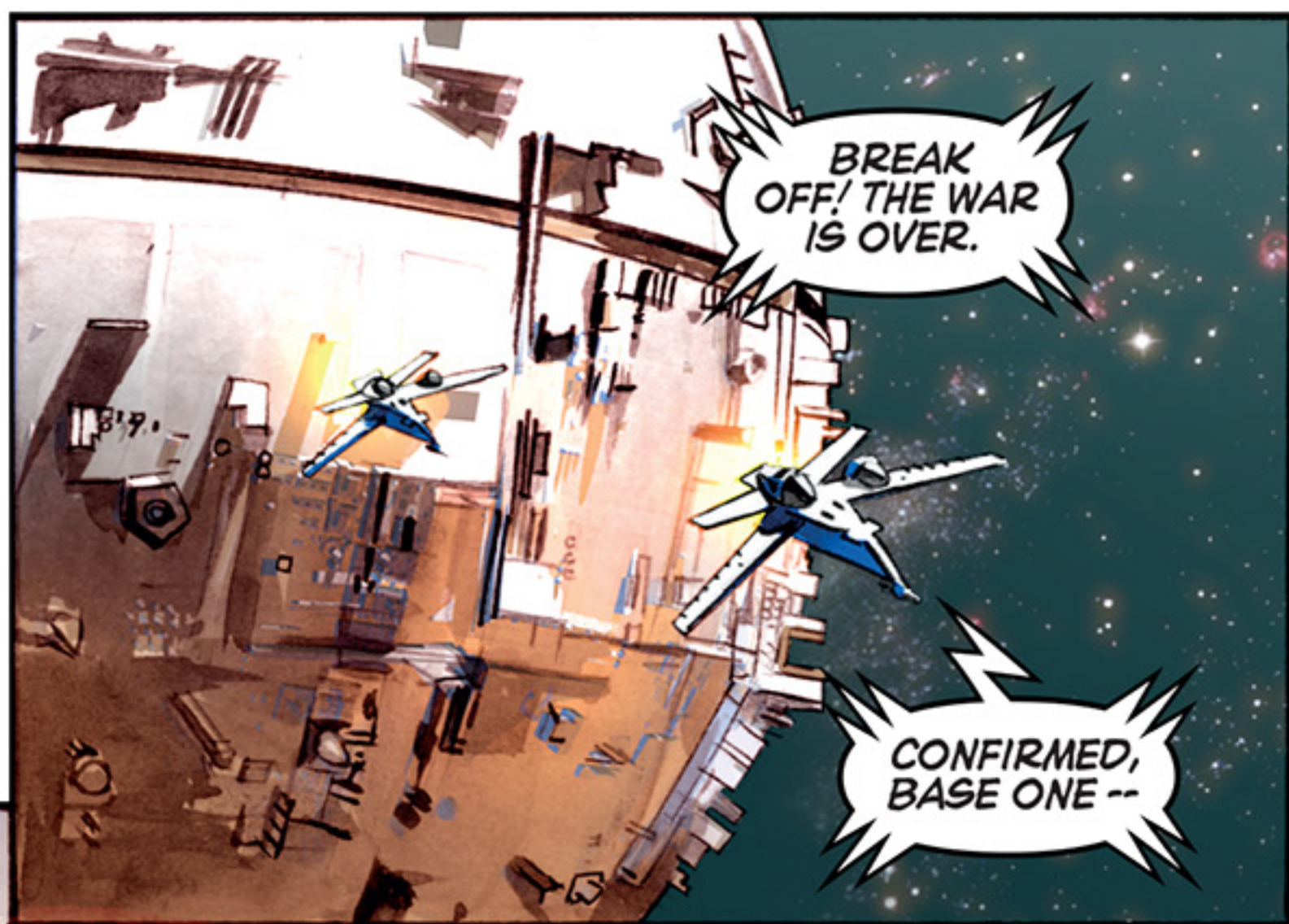
THE PLANET IS OURS.
A THREE-HOUR WAR. YOU
EXPECTED LONGER. JEDI
OR NOT, WE HAVE BEATEN
SKYWALKER.

REMEMBER, YOU
MUST CAPTURE THE HEIR
TO THE ROYAL FAMILY ALIVE.
THE AQUILAE CLAN HAS RULED
THIS SYSTEM FOR OVER TEN
THOUSAND YEARS. THE PEOPLE
WILL FOLLOW NO OTHER.



WE HAVE
WON A TRULY
GREAT PRIZE FOR
THE EMPIRE. THEY
HAVE A GENETICS
TREASURE --
CLONING!





THE STAR WARS

The Star Wars

c/o Dark Horse Comics
10956 SE Main Street
Milwaukie, OR 97222

starwars@darkhorse.com
Boards.DarkHorse.com

For our first letter column, we have a special guest to answer your letters: J. W. Rinzler, executive editor at LucasBooks and scriptwriter for The Star Wars! From all of us at Dark Horse Comics, we hope you enjoyed issue #1— and that you continue to read this extra-special series. There is so much amazingness to come!

*Until next month,
Freddie Lins, assistant editor*

Oh, boy. It's a great day when you come home and a copy of *The Star Wars* is in your mailbox and you didn't expect it at all. It was like sitting in the theater for *The Phantom Menace* for the first time again. New *Star Wars* from the mind of George Lucas always elicits giddy euphoria from me. I have *always* wanted to know where *Star Wars* came from. And I got to take that first step into a larger world once again.

If I have one word for this issue, it is "*mind-blowing*." From the stunning art, where every panel is a frameworthy painting, to the story, which unfolds faster and faster with each panel, it just grabs you and does not stop to let you process. I had to read it a few times before I even dared writing this letter. It's fascinating to see so many puzzle pieces that you know, but that have suddenly different shapes, and how they fit together is just so different, yet familiar. This story is so epically paced. So massive in scope and size, and yet just like all the *Star Wars* movies, as it focuses on these characters during their journeys. It feels like I am watching a movie, and man, the art *sells* that feeling. Just spectacular. I don't think I could go on enough about how good it is. The emotion on Kane's face after his son died was just heartbreaking. In every panel it's clear exactly what the characters are thinking and going through. It feels like the quote Mr. Lucas has long used—that the movies should work without dialogue. Visually you should understand everything just from the pictures. And you do.

The characters feel just as strong right off the bat as in the original *Star Wars*. I'm very interested to learn more of these Jedi-Bendu and their struggles against the evil Empire. I really want to know why these Sith hate the Jedi. Why are they hunting them? Why were they bodyguards of the Empire, and why is there a new Empire? Why was there a Jedi

Rebellion and who is Vader and what is his role in this? The lightsabers were all red in the first battle . . . I don't know if that is on purpose, but it was fascinating seeing good guys with red sabers. After so long knowing what *Star Wars* is, such a small change stands out, just casually showing you it's not the *Star Wars* you know and anything can happen.

This feels like *Star Wars*, but there are a million unanswered questions, and that just feels exciting!

The visuals of new ships, new worlds, new aliens . . . It's just a treat to turn each page and see something new. I loved the Sith popping up like the Tusken. And the "Yippee" made me smile ear to ear!

I cannot wait for issue #2. Especially since that cliffhanger makes me think the Death Star is coming!

Andrew Vieau
DEATHBYMONKEYS

Yes, the "lazerswords" (as they're named in the script) were meant to be red, as George Lucas described them as such. So glad the "Yippee" made you smile; that's something I added, but which felt right because Deak is a forerunner of Episode I Anakin in some ways—and both are modeled to some extent on Francis Robinson, youngest child in Swiss Family Robinson, in the 1960 Disney film directed by Ken . . . (wait for it!) . . . Annakin.

And, yes, something big is coming to terrorize the planet Aquilae . . . but, as everything in The Star Wars is slightly different, it isn't called a Death Star! And it's true—the more you reread this story, the better, as it's working on many levels and moves quickly. Mike has added so much detail and feeling, and, as you point out, there is so much tantalizing backstory. I'm sure you recognized the derelict starship by the Starkillers' home on page 2, panel 1.

Wow . . . That's my initial reaction after reading *The Star Wars* #1! Wow because of the great art, the great story . . . and wow because I did not expect to be wowed!

My first reaction when this series was announced during WonderCon Anaheim (March 2013) was not very enthusiastic. I considered this to be just like the *Infinites* stories of the Original Trilogy, and nothing more. And I really did not understand the enthusiasm this announcement received in the mainstream media. But soon after seeing the first

samples of artwork, my interest was somewhat piqued, as it looked fantastic. But now, after reading #1, I am totally excited about this! Man, this is one serious story, which adds a lot of depth to (the development process of) *A New Hope*! After consulting the book *Star Wars: The Annotated Screenplays*, I found out that *The Star Wars* is based on the very first treatment, right?

Anyway, I am looking forward to the next seven issues of this story! I did *not* expect to see young Deak die, even though it was in the treatment and I must have read that before! But being a treatment, I didn't think too much about it at the time; but now, seeing it in story form, it made an impact on me—one that I certainly did not expect! I guess George Lucas's earlier version was darker than what we finally saw on the big screen waaaay back in 1977 (1978 for me, as the movie was released later in the Netherlands). I will put the *Annotated Screenplays* book back in my attic now, as I do not want to read what will happen next! I want to experience it through this comic, and be wowed yet again!

Great job, guys! Even after twenty-two years of handling the *Star Wars* license, you keep on surprising me!

Eddie

P.S. How about an original follow-up story after this series has finished?

The Star Wars is based on Lucas's complete rough draft from 1974. He finished the treatment in May 1973, which was only about ten pages long, without dialogue, and so wouldn't be adaptable. You can read a summary about each version, from treatment to shooting script, and beyond, in my book The Making of Star Wars. And yeah, the rough draft has a different feel in some parts from the first film—it's a little more violent, a little looser—this is George Lucas's blue-sky, no-holds-barred version!

As to a follow-up, I'd love to write one, and explore some of the mysteries hinted at, but . . . Lucasfilm has a little movie called Episode VII on the horizon . . .

So I've read my copy twice now and I have to say that J. W. Rinzler, Mike Mayhew, and the rest of the team have definitely lived up to the hype surrounding this book. Rinzler has done a fantastic job adapting the script, and Mayhew's art is some of the best I've seen in a *Star Wars* release (right up there with Jan [Dursema] and Doug [Wheatley]'s work!). Obviously, the McQuarrie influence is there, as it should be.

It's so different from what we ultimately got in *A New Hope*, yet it's fun to see so many names and concepts used that eventually found their way into the six films and the Expanded Universe over the years. There's such a good mix of both the familiar and the new. I really enjoyed the homage to the Tusken Raider attack and Starkiller (more machine than man) having Vader's chest piece. Little Easter eggs like that were a welcome addition.

With new movies on the horizon (yippee!), this seems to be the perfect opportunity to look back on the past before we plough headfirst into a new era of *Star Wars* fandom. Also, a piece of *Star Wars* history such as this needs the hardcover treatment at the end of its run.

Looking forward to issue #2!

Marty Ryan
Ireland

Yes, the timing has worked out well. I just checked and Randy Stradley and I started talking about this in January 2012; George gave us the go-ahead in April 2012. More than a year later . . . here we are!

But the Sith's appearance wasn't a homage to the Tusken Raider attack—Mike Mayhew drew that as Lucas scripted it; that is, the Sith Knight attack on Annikin and Deak precedes the Tusken Raider attack on Luke. That moment was Lucas's prototype vision for something surging up in front of the electrobinoculars; he had that in his mind from the get-go. Then he played around until he found the perfect spot for it in the shooting script. Kane's chest piece, on the other hand, you're right about: that was Mike's great idea!

Couldn't agree more about the hardcover treatment—and large format, please. Thanks, everyone, for writing. Keep these e-mails coming. I look forward to answering them.

J. W. Rinzler

Next Issue!

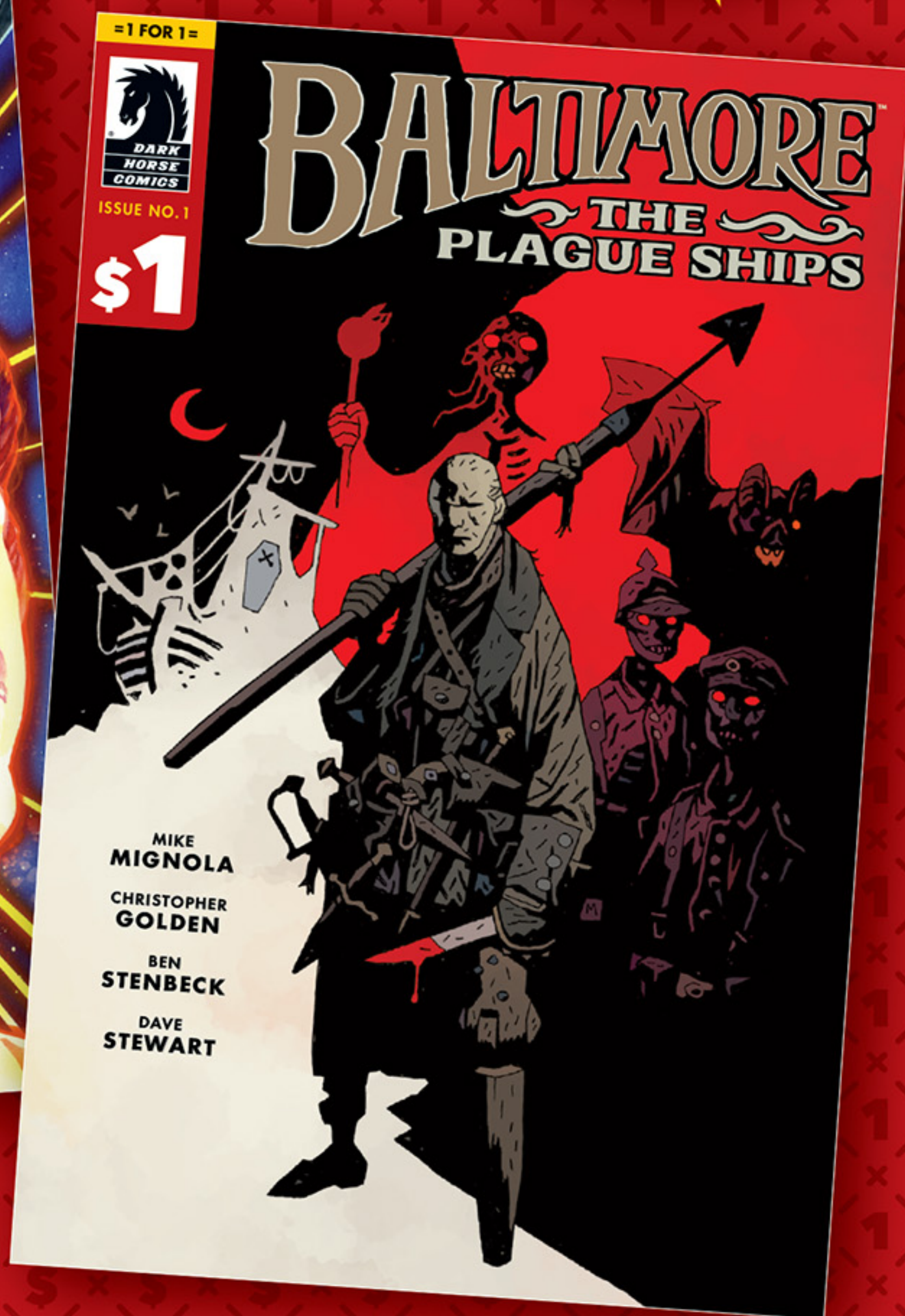
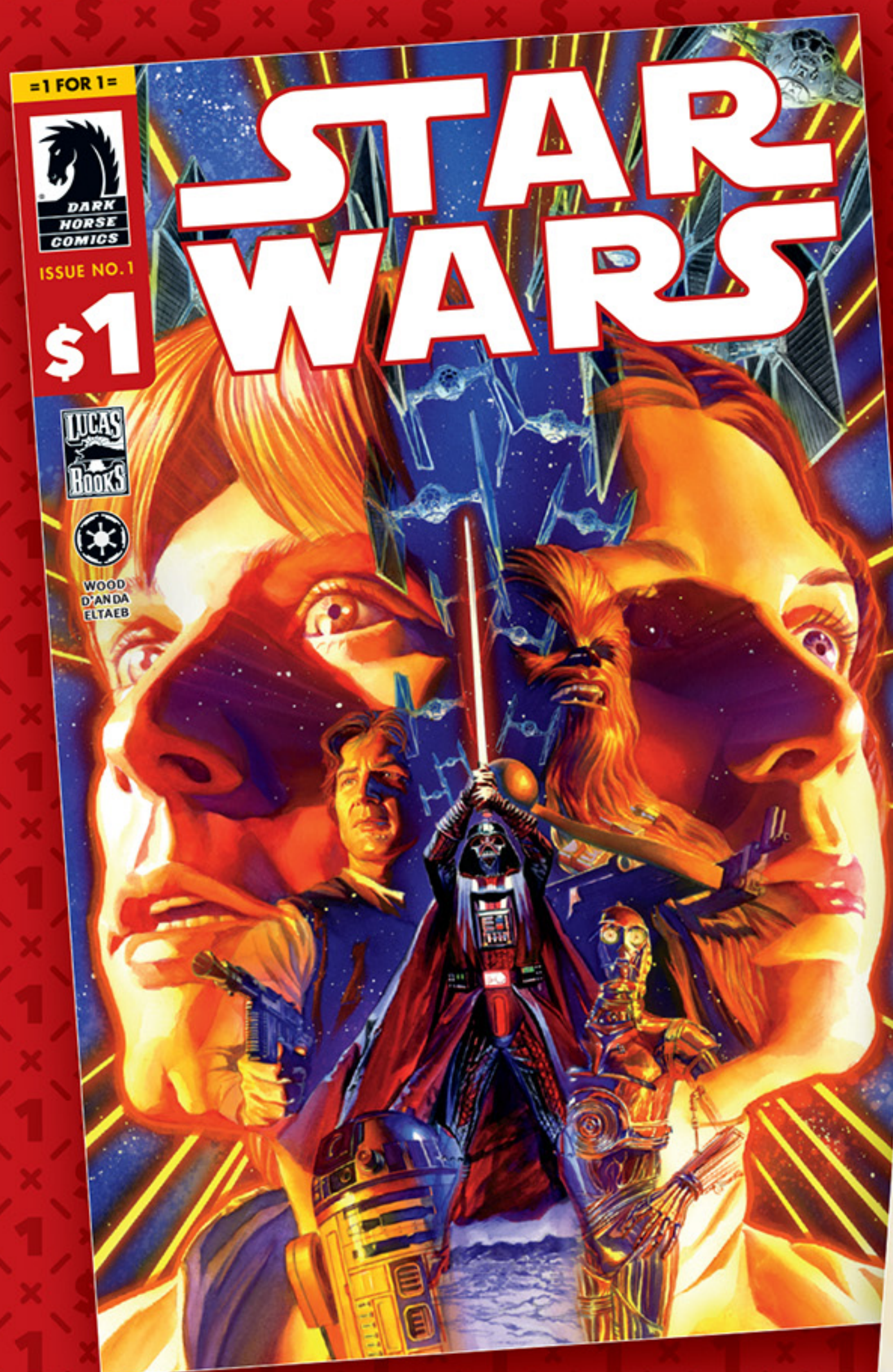


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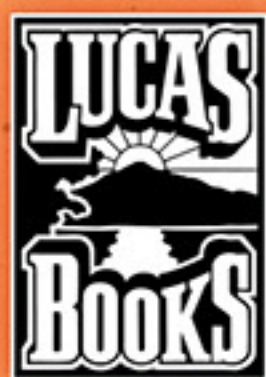
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#3 |

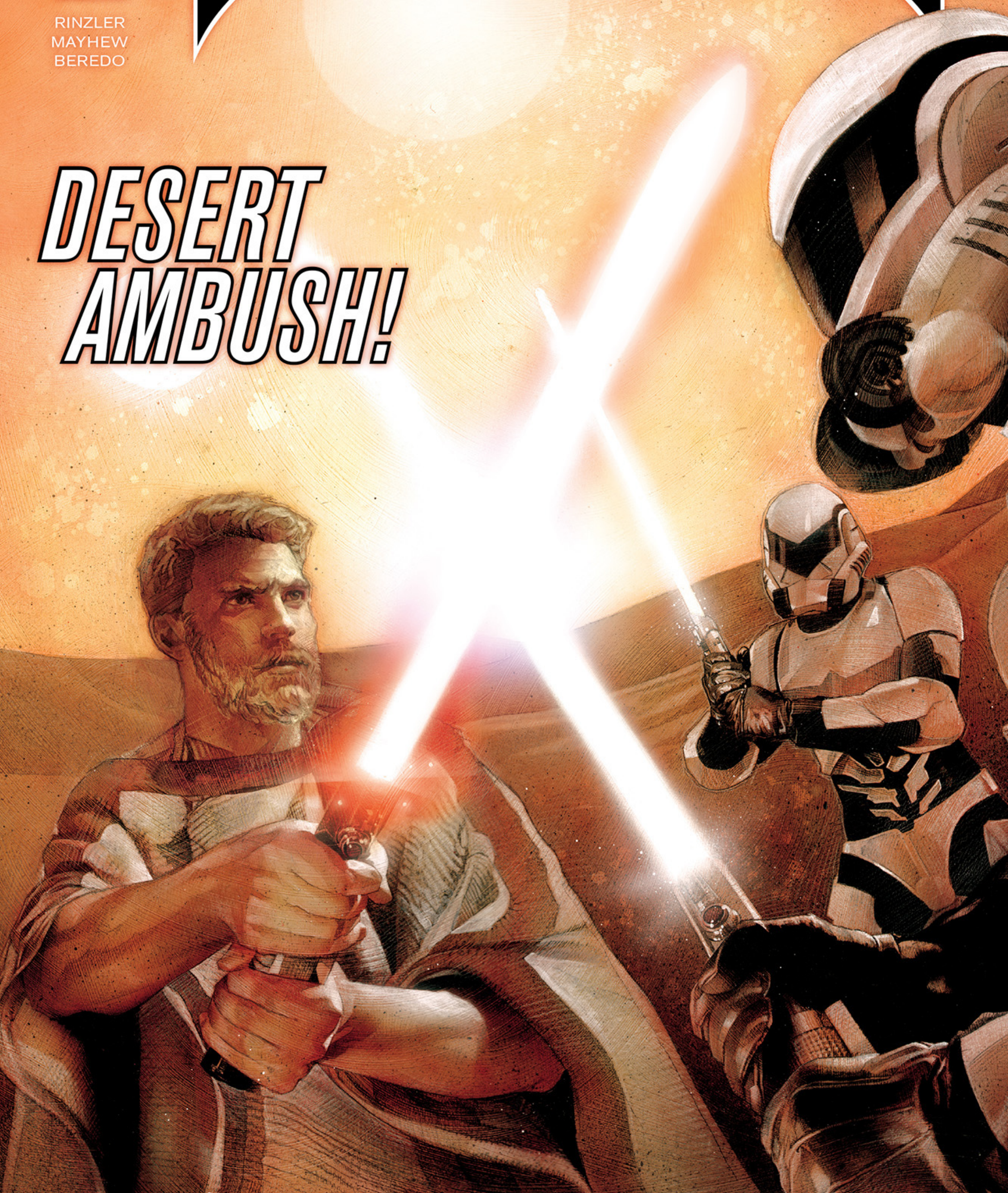


RINZLER
MAYHEW
BEREDO

BASED ON GEORGE LUCAS'S ORIGINAL ROUGH-DRAFT SCREENPLAY

THE STAR WARS

DESERT AMBUSH!



ADAPTED FROM THE ORIGINAL ROUGH-DRAFT SCREENPLAY BY GEORGE LUCAS

THE STAR WARS

Alerted to an impending Imperial attack and invasion, Jedi General Skywalker organized a valiant defense of the planet Aquilae against an immense Space Fortress. But Skywalker's efforts were undermined by traitors in the Senate who welcomed the Empire.

Young Jedi Annikin Starkiller was dispatched to retrieve the headstrong Princess Leia and return her to safety within the hidden fortress beneath the Palace of Lite. Elsewhere, the convoy carrying Aquilae's King Kayos was destroyed during the Empire's bombardment of the planet.

Meanwhile, aboard the Space Fortress, two construction droids, Artwo Detwo and See Threepio, terrorized by the ongoing battle, escaped in a life-pod to Aquilae below . . .

SCRIPT
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COLORS
RAIN BEREDO

LETTERING
MICHAEL HEISLER

COVER
NICK RUNGE

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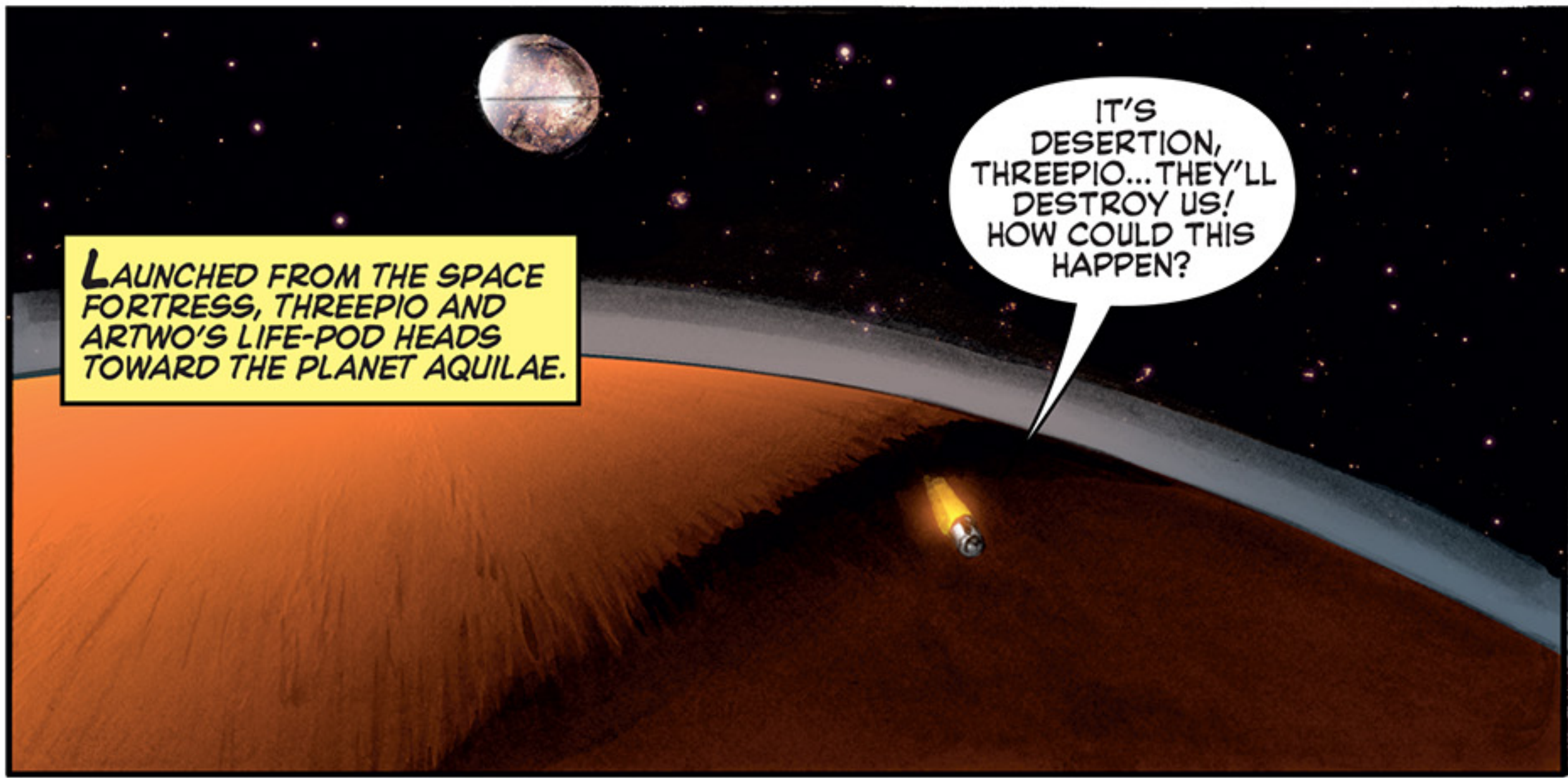
PUBLISHER
MIKE RICHARDSON

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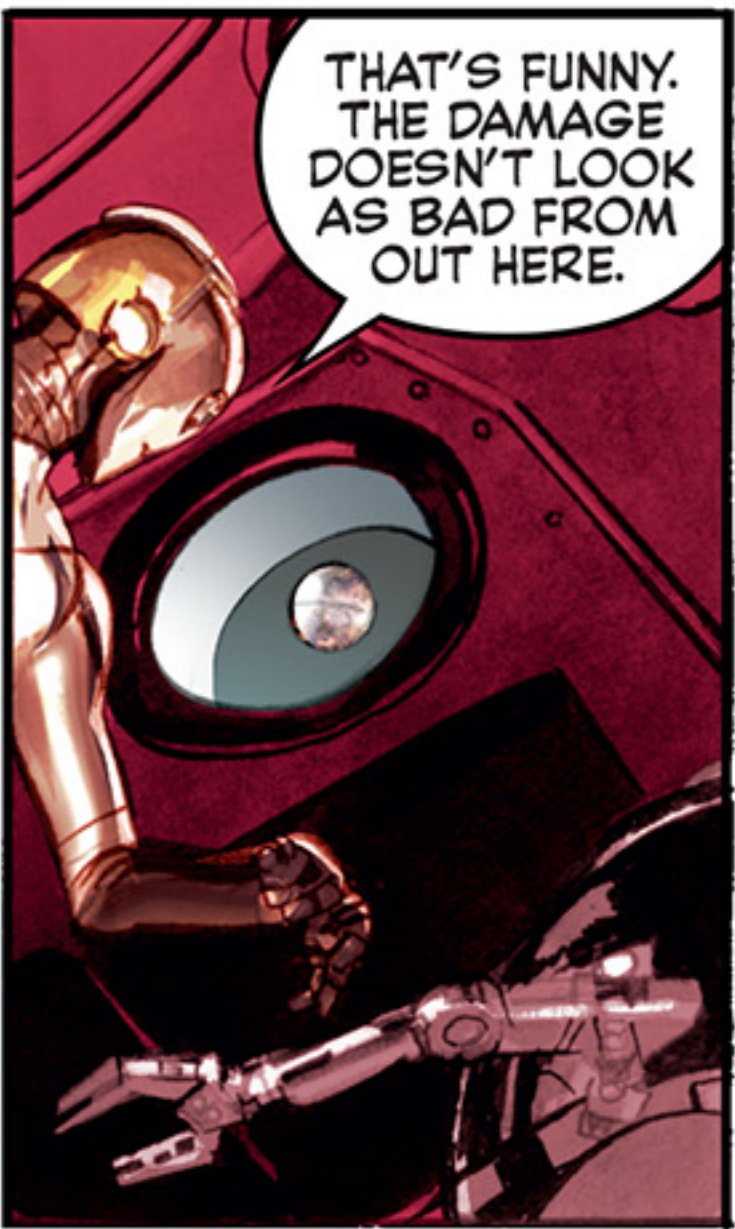
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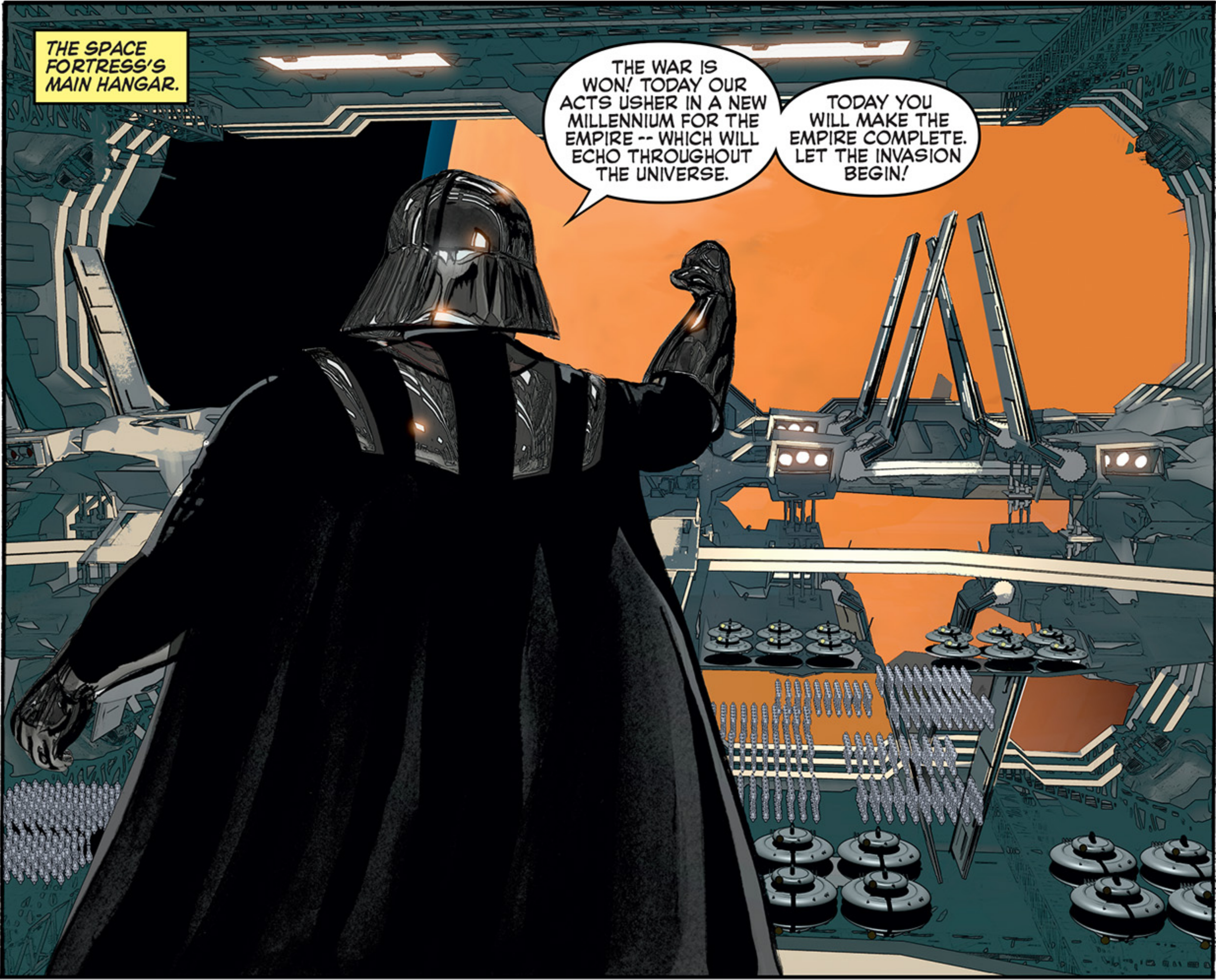


LAUNCHED FROM THE SPACE
FORTRESS, THREEPIO AND
ARTWO'S LIFE-POD HEADS
TOWARD THE PLANET AQUILAE.

IT'S
DESERTION,
THREEPIO... THEY'LL
DESTROY US!
HOW COULD THIS
HAPPEN?



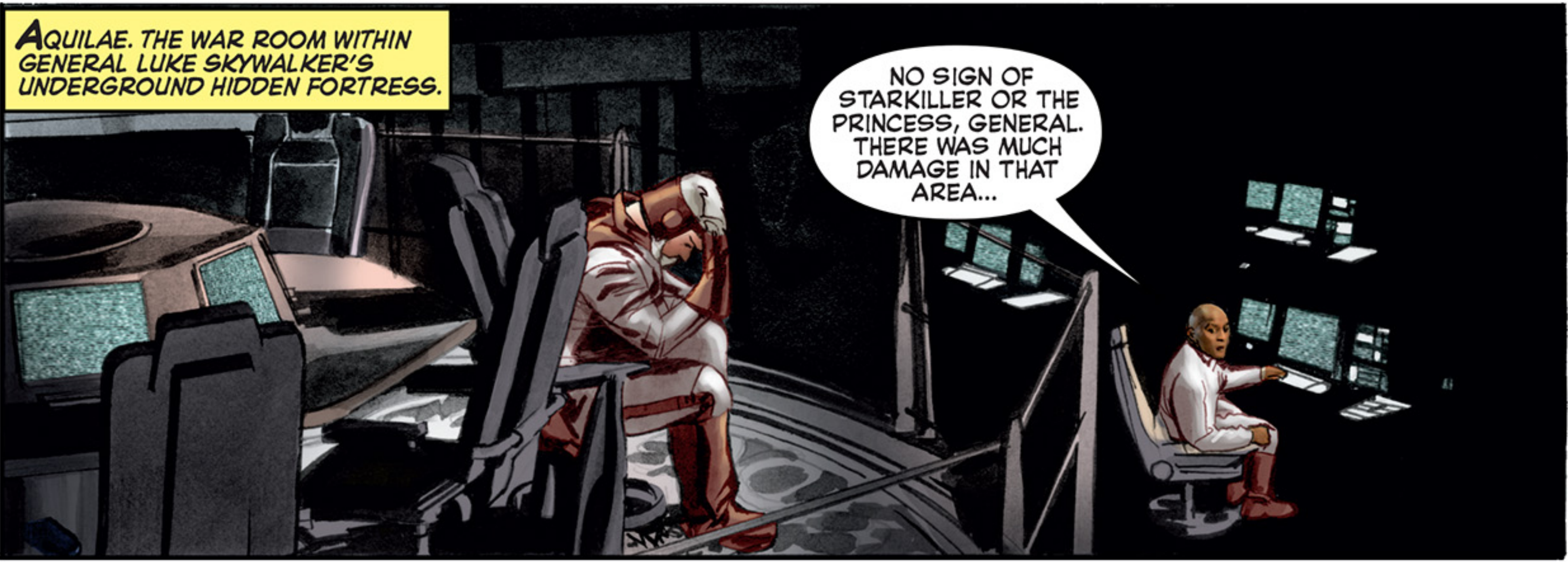
THAT'S FUNNY.
THE DAMAGE
DOESN'T LOOK
AS BAD FROM
OUT HERE.



THE SPACE
FORTRESS'S
MAIN HANGAR.

THE WAR IS
WON! TODAY OUR
ACTS USHER IN A NEW
MILLENNIUM FOR THE
EMPIRE -- WHICH WILL
ECHO THROUGHOUT
THE UNIVERSE.

TODAY YOU
WILL MAKE THE
EMPIRE COMPLETE.
LET THE INVASION
BEGIN!



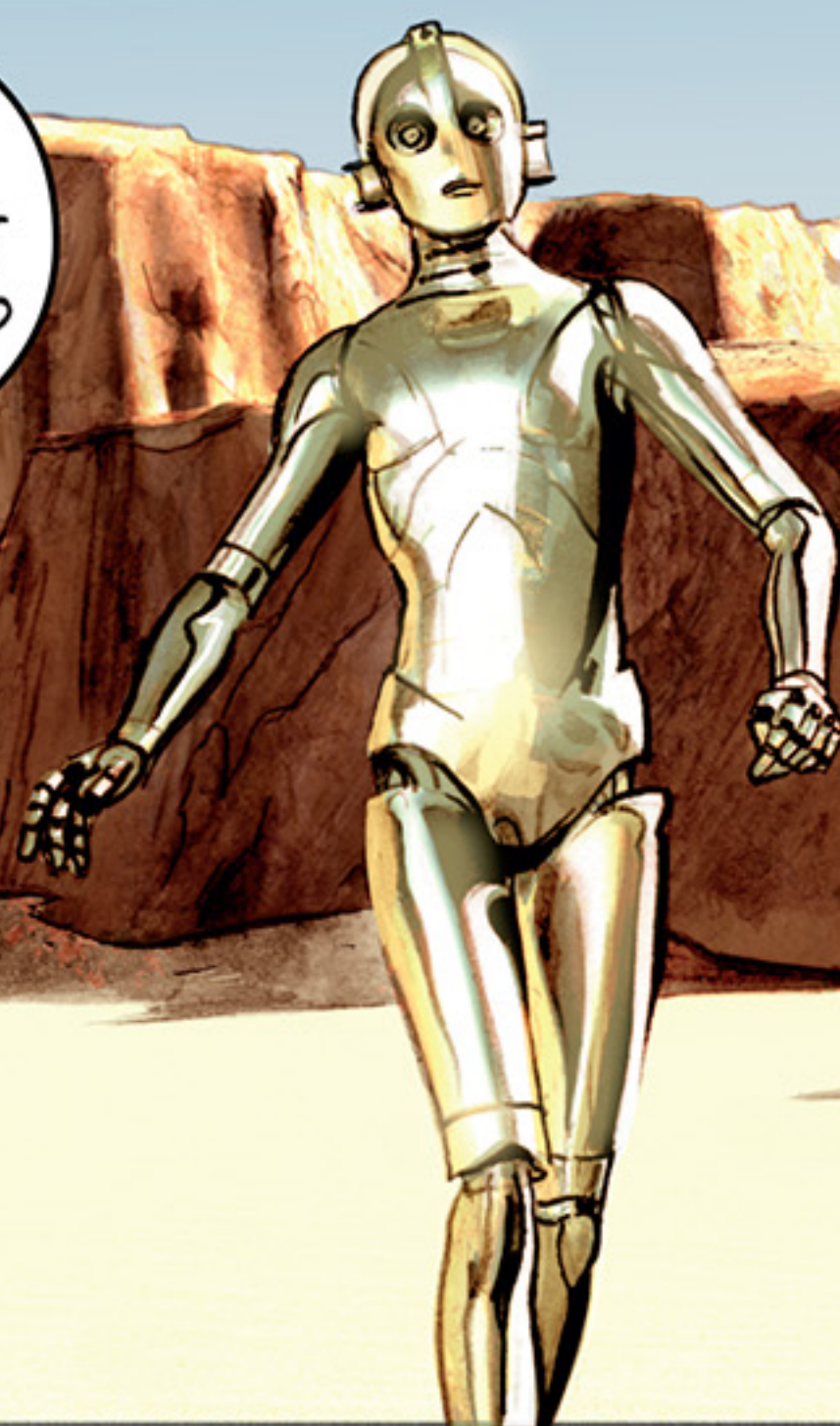
AQUILAE. THE WAR ROOM WITHIN
GENERAL LUKE SKYWALKER'S
UNDERGROUND HIDDEN FORTRESS.

NO SIGN OF
STARKILLER OR THE
PRINCESS, GENERAL.
THERE WAS MUCH
DAMAGE IN THAT
AREA...

AQUILAE. NEAR THE EDGE OF JUNDLAND, THE DUNE SEA.

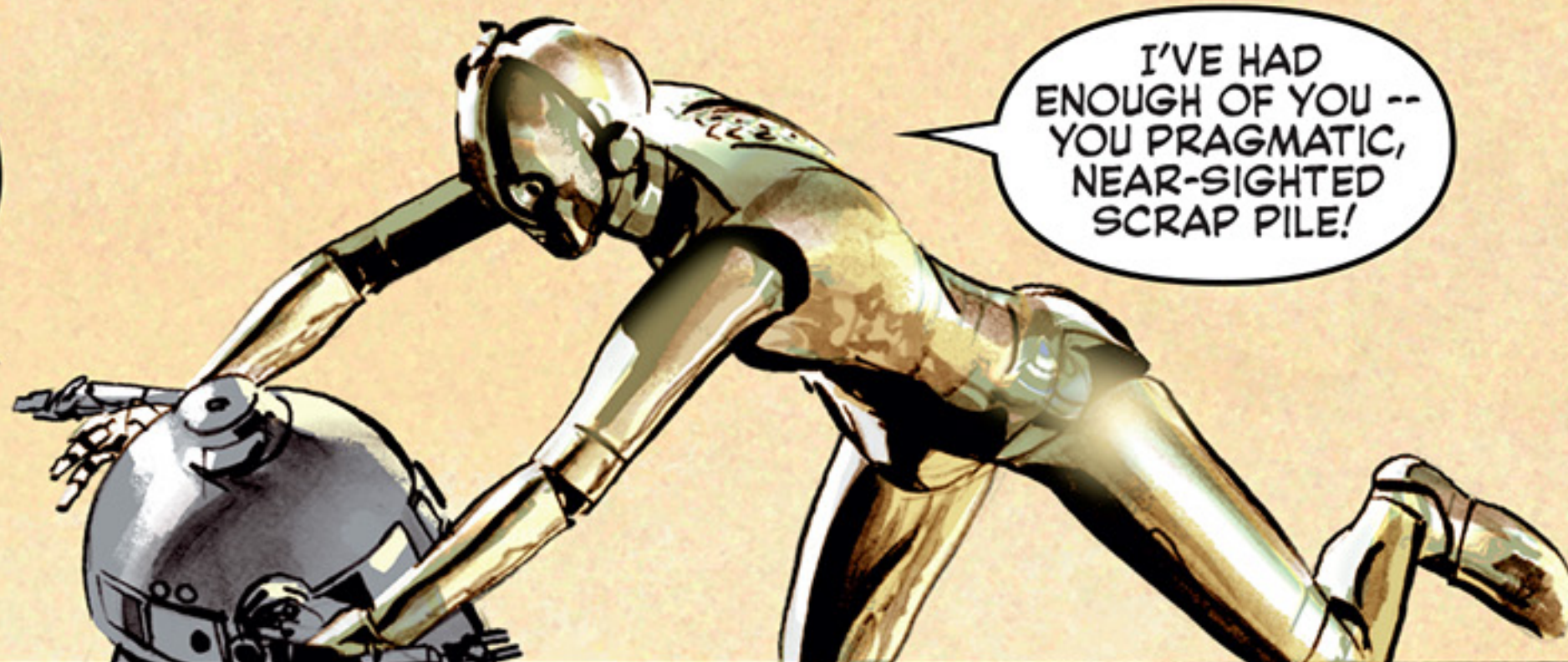
WE'RE NOT BUILT FOR THIS! YOU'RE NOTHING MORE THAN A DIMWITTED, EMOTION-BRAINED INTELLECTUAL. WHY YOU WERE CREATED IS BEYOND MY LOGIC SYSTEMS.

THANKS TO YOU, WE'RE DESERTERS, AND WE'LL PROBABLY BE DESTROYED ON SIGHT. ON TOP OF THAT, YOU'RE GOING THE WRONG WAY!



ALL THIS FILTH IS GETTING -- WAAAHH!

I'VE HAD ENOUGH OF YOU -- YOU PRAGMATIC, NEAR-SIGHTED SCRAP PILE!

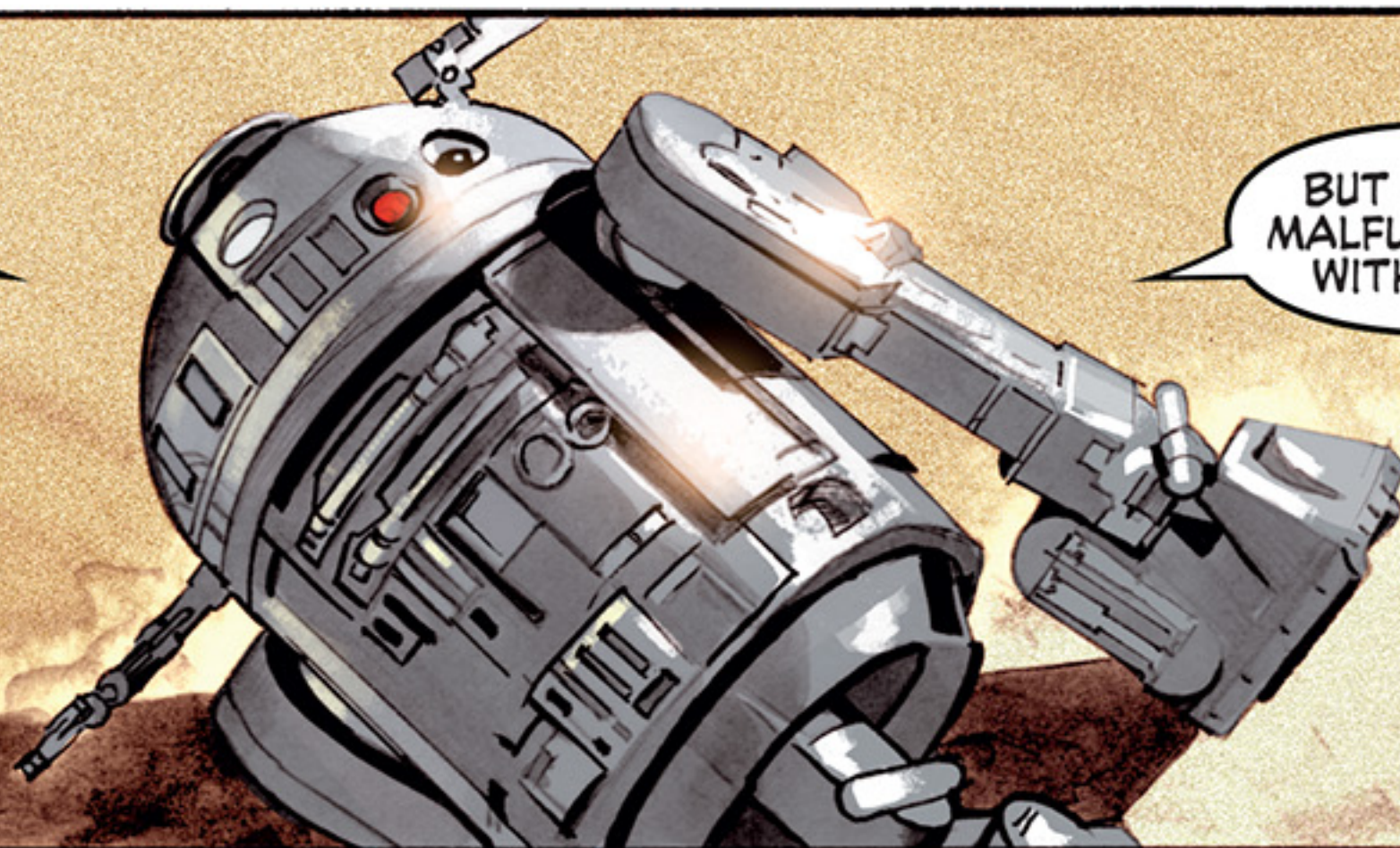


YOU GO YOUR OWN WAY!



THAT HURT.

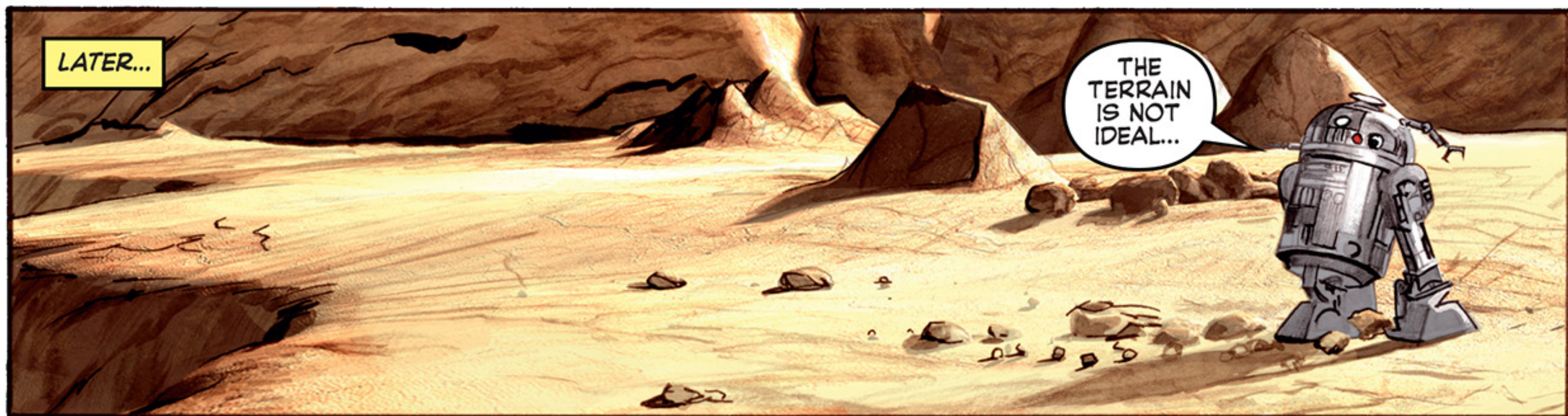
BUT YOU'LL BE MALFUNCTIONING WITHIN A DAY.



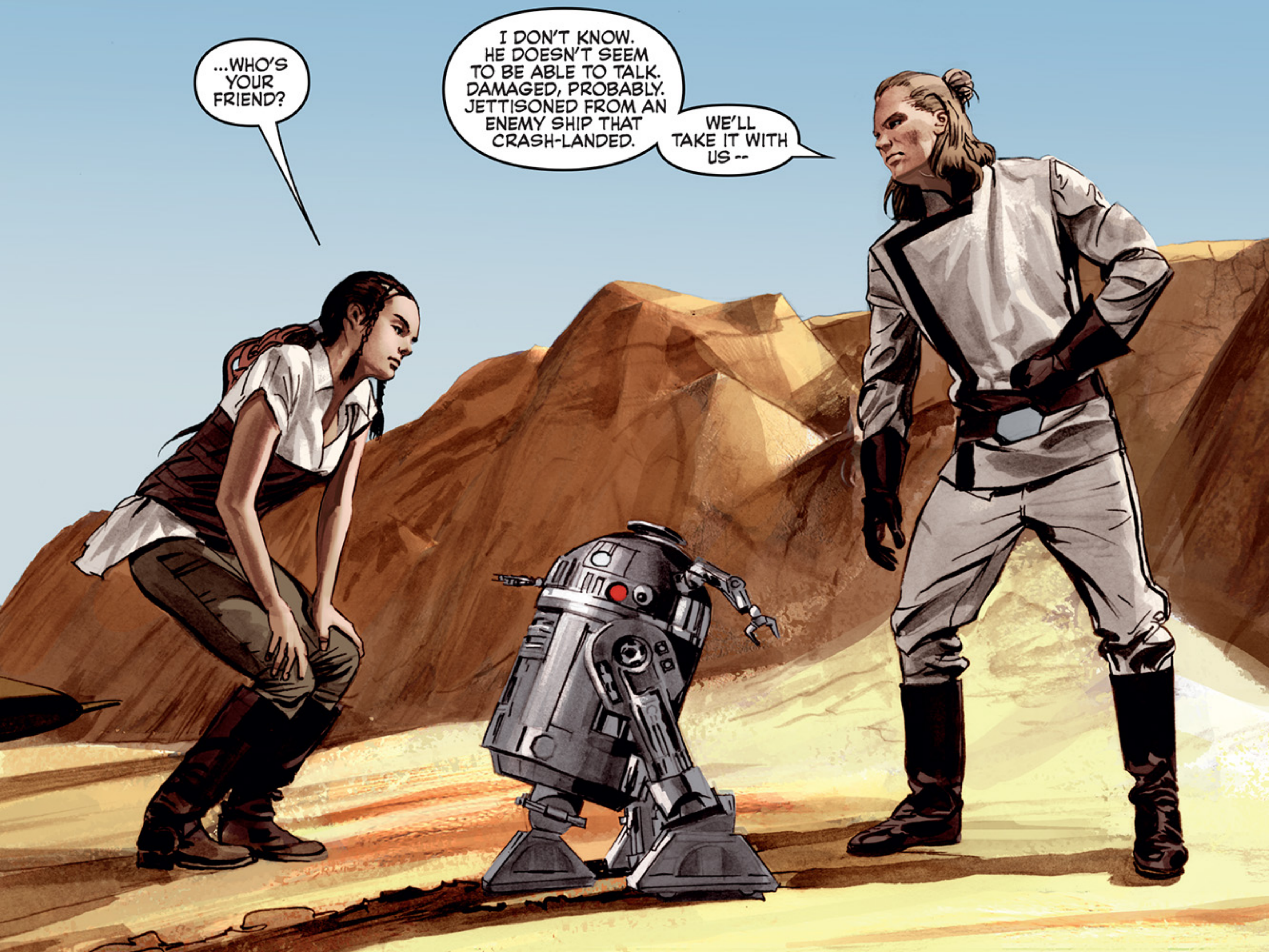
AND YOU'RE GOING THE WRONG WAY! YOUR WAY IS **ALWAYS** THE WRONG WAY!

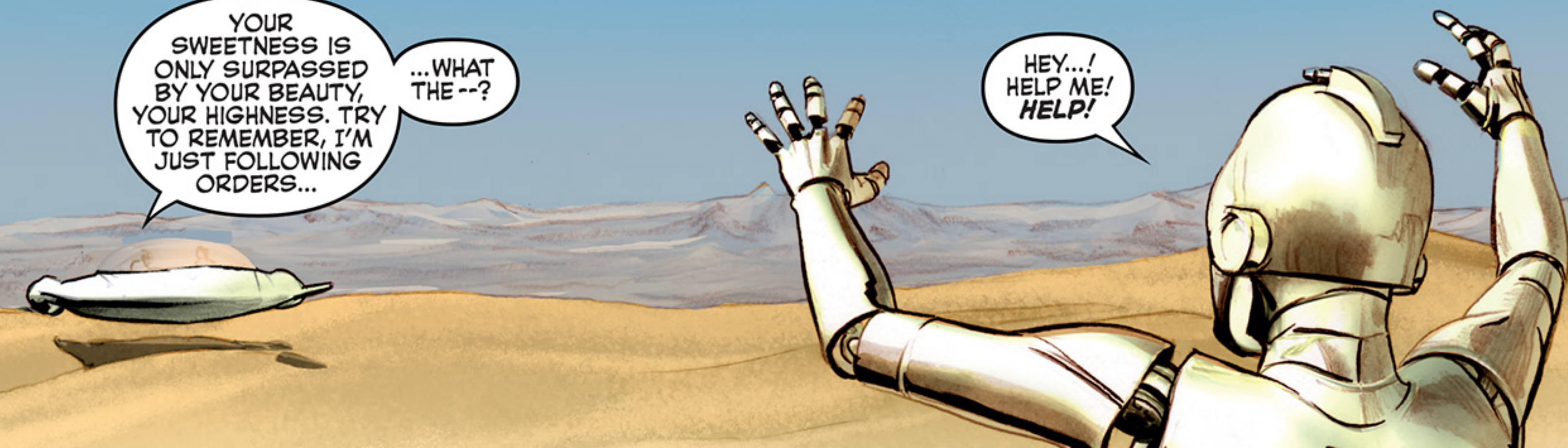
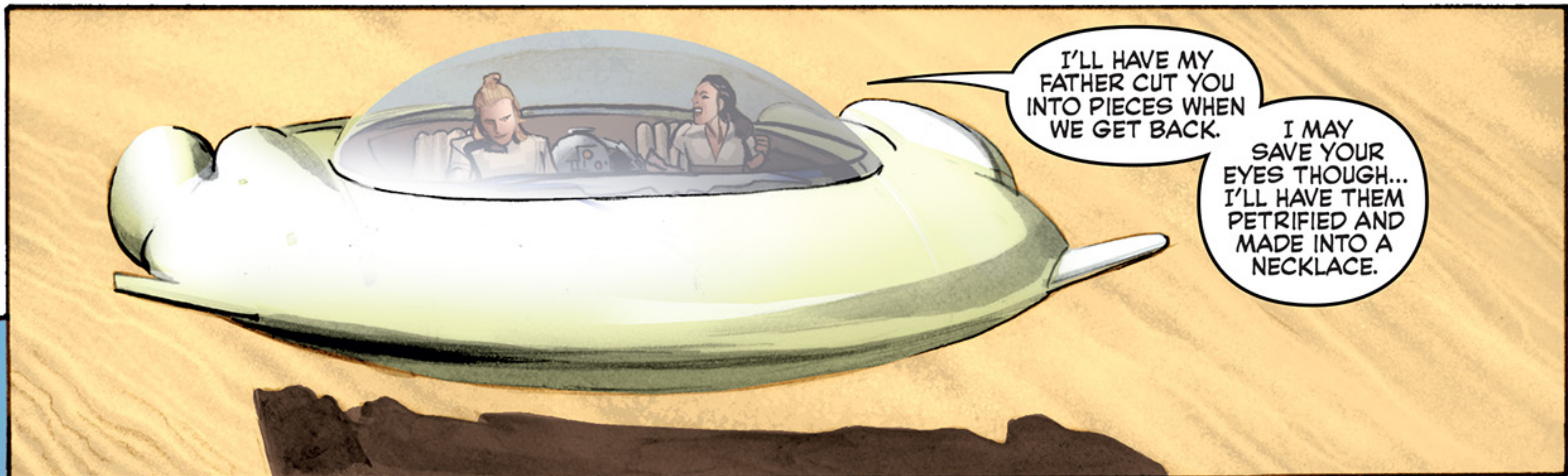
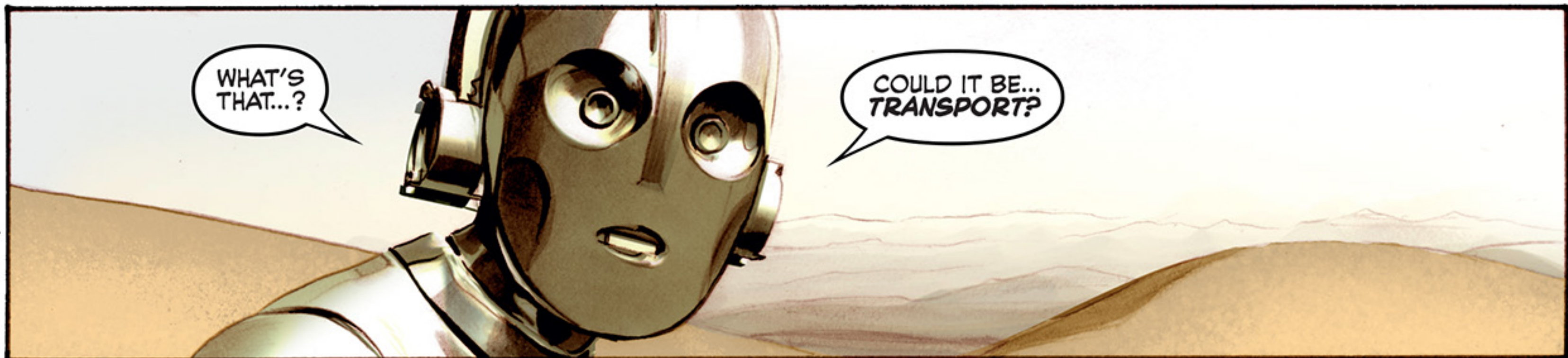
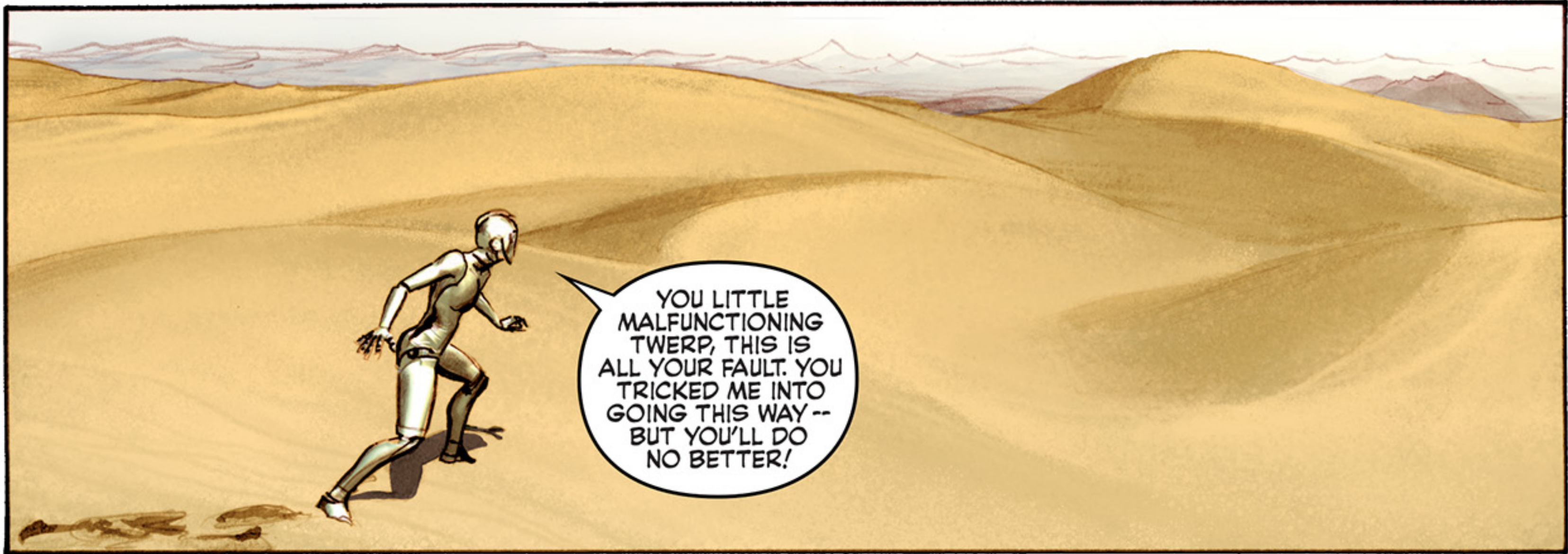
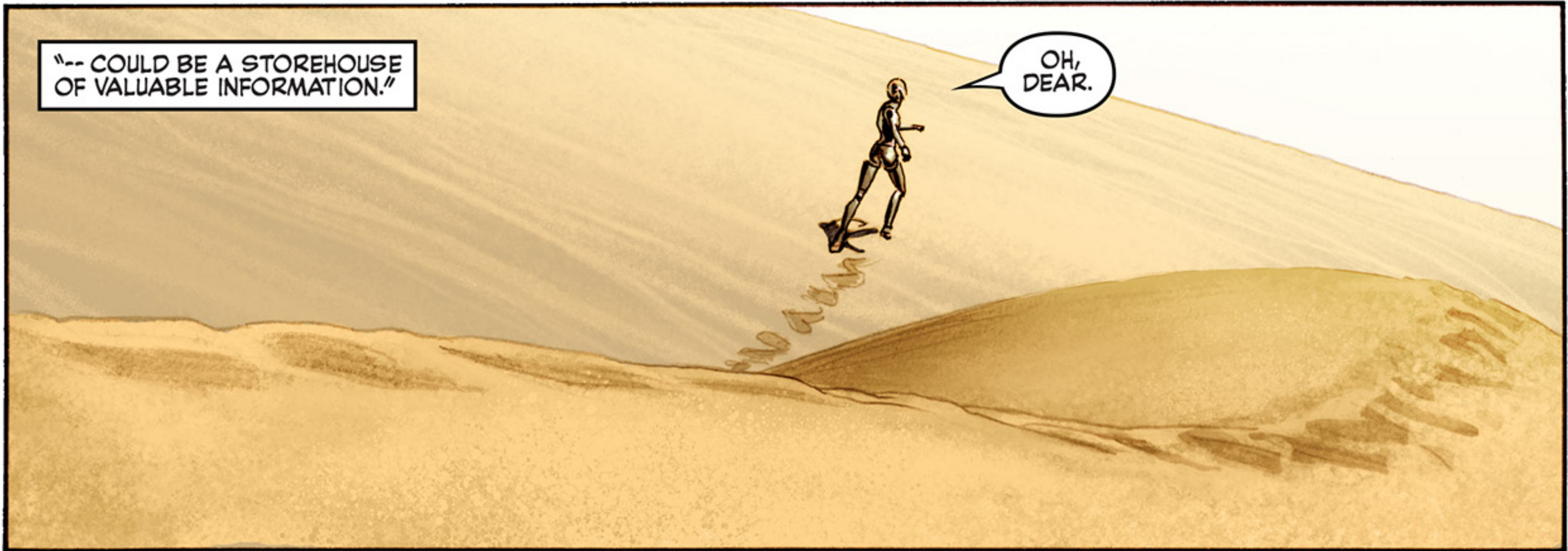
WE'LL SEE. AND DON'T LET ME CATCH YOU FOLLOWING ME, BEGGING FOR HELP -- BECAUSE YOU WON'T GET IT FROM ME!

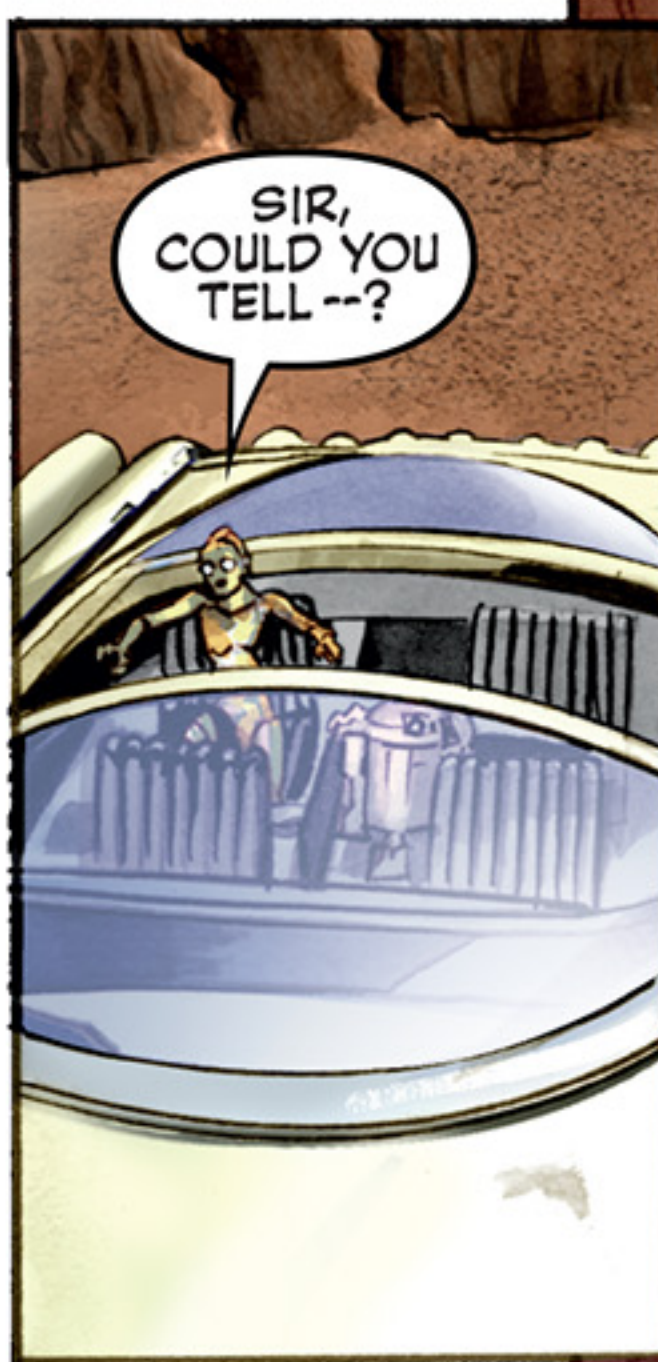
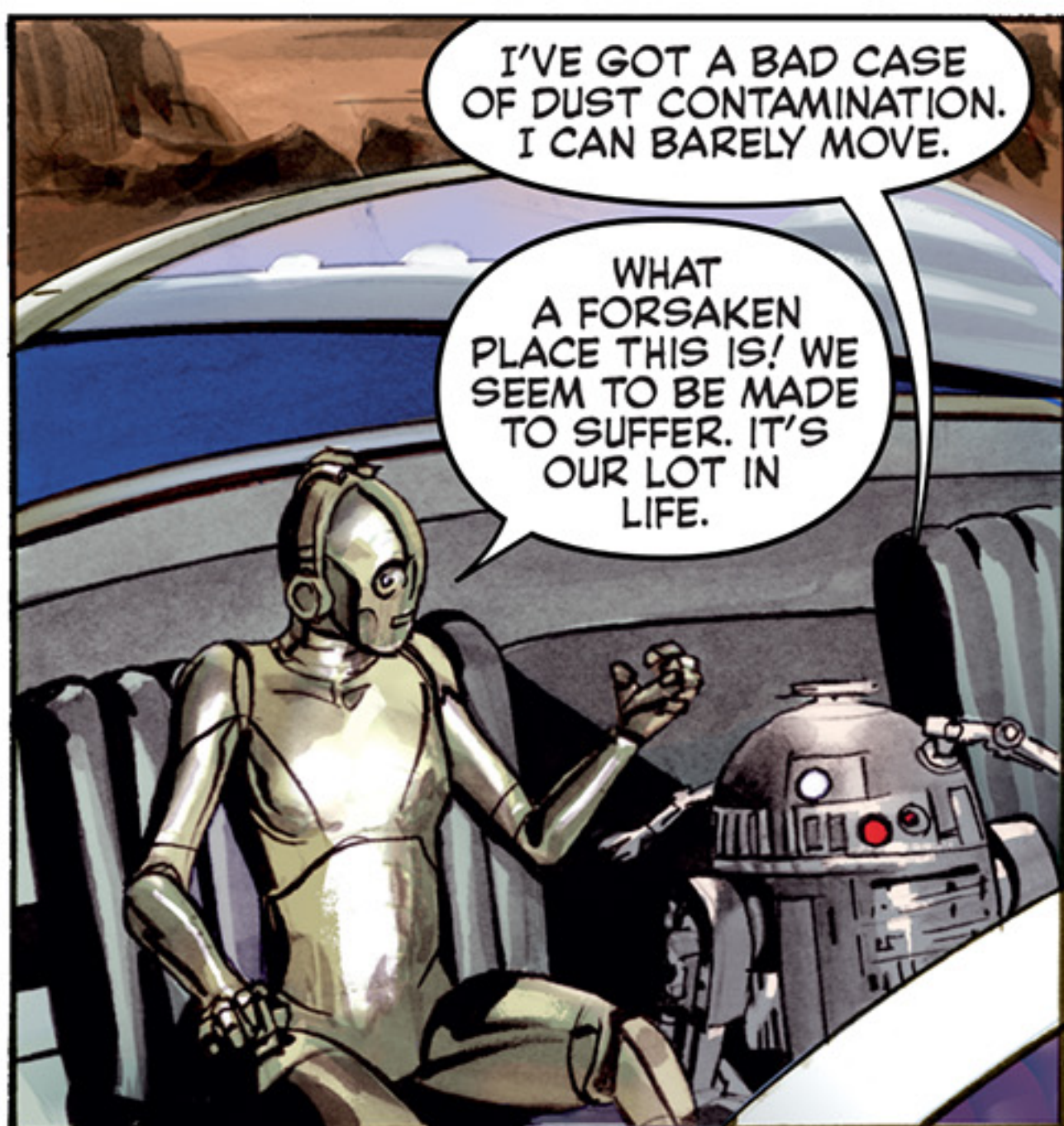
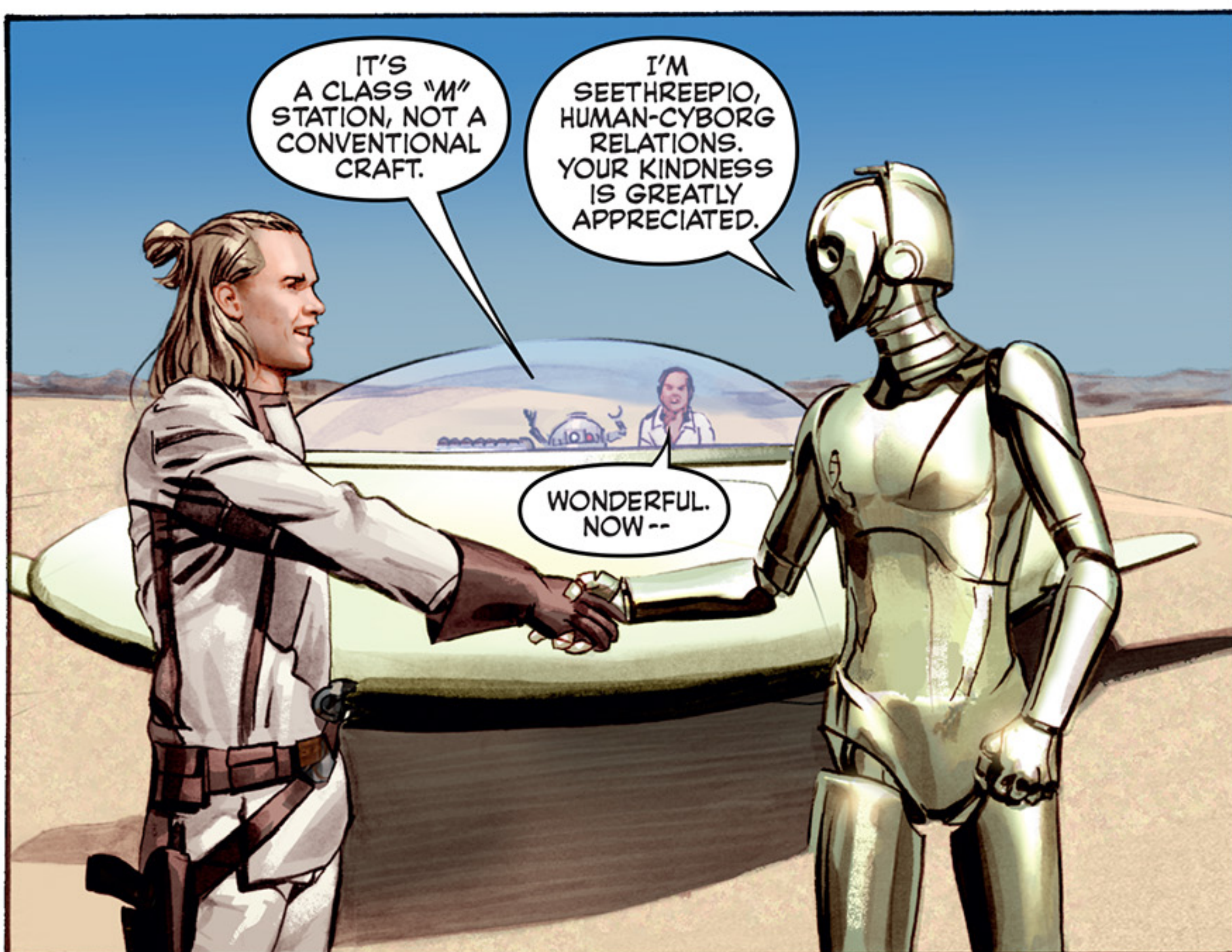
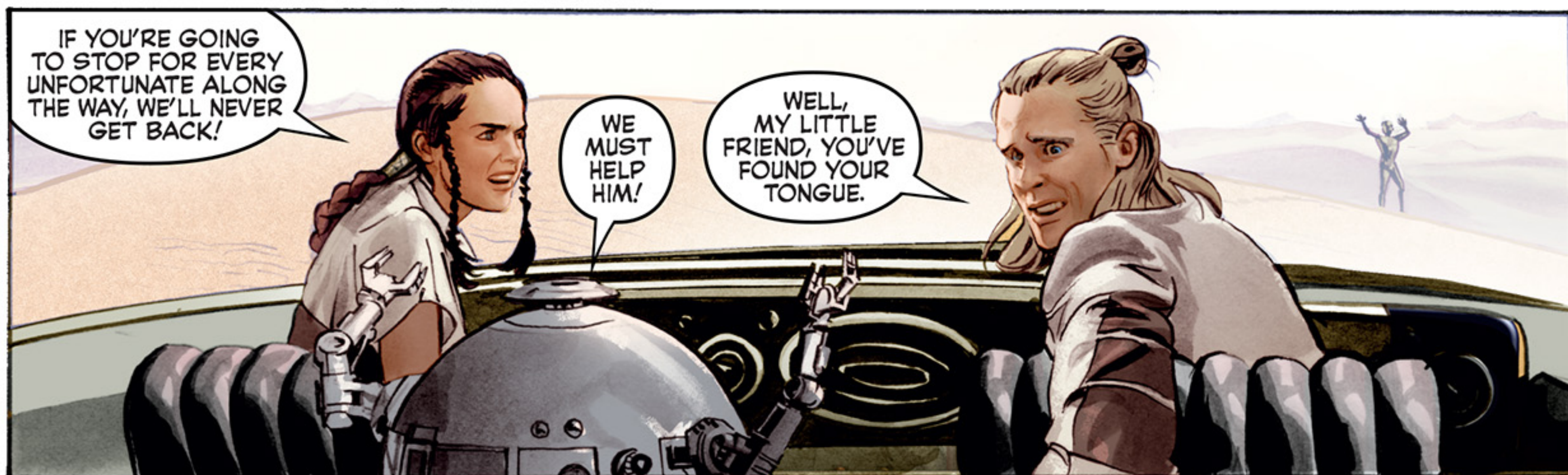


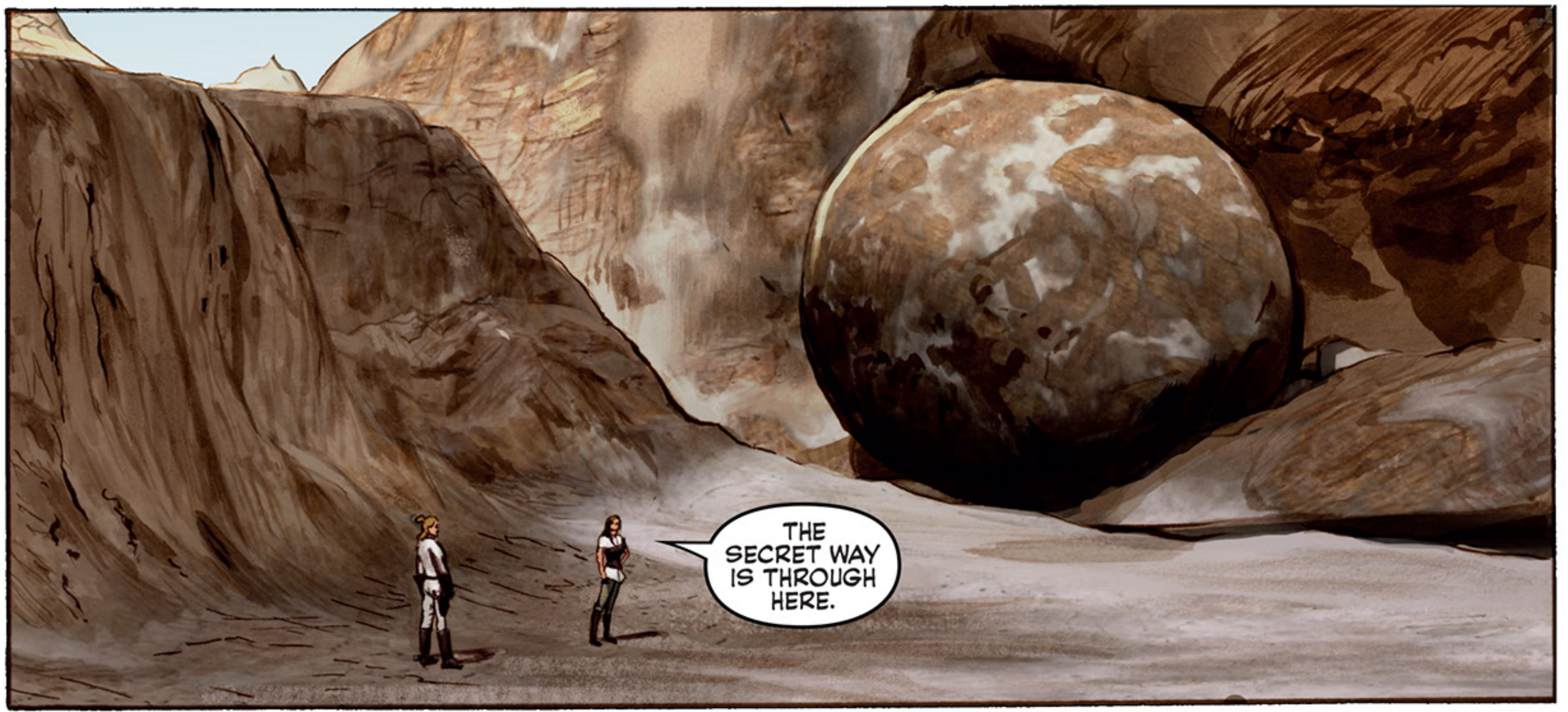


THE TERRAIN IS NOT IDEAL...











GENERAL,
I WANT YOU TO
DO SOMETHING
WITH THIS...THIS
BARBARIAN!

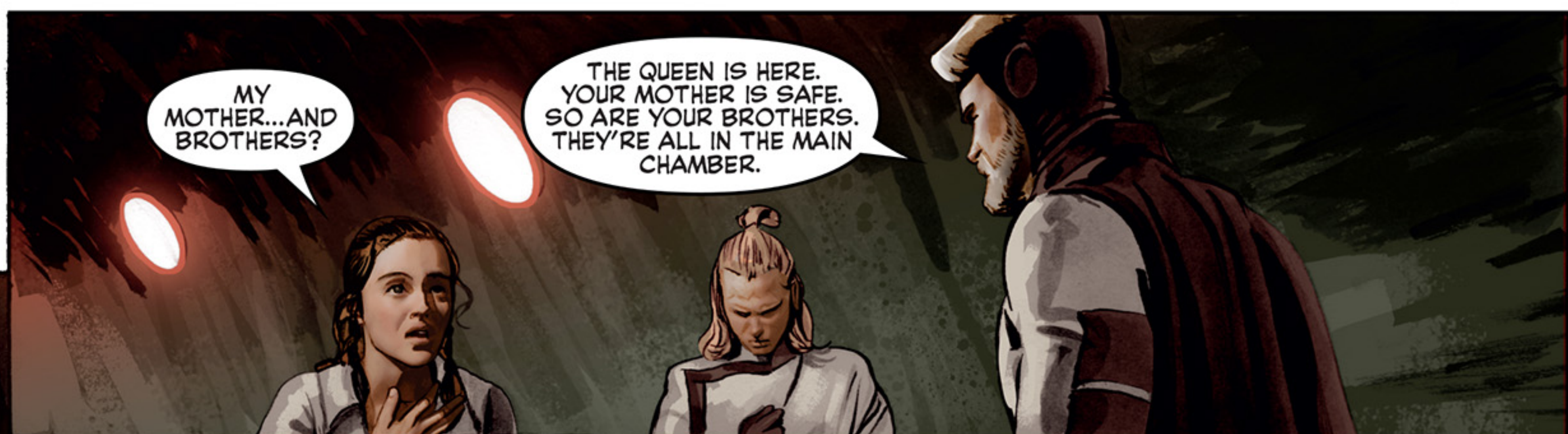


HE'S THE
MOST --

I RECEIVED
YOUR MESSAGE,
PRINCESS LEIA.
BUT THE KING,
YOUR FATHER,
IS DEAD...



...KILLED
IN AN ENEMY
ATTACK. I'M
SO SORRY.



MY
MOTHER...AND
BROTHERS?

THE QUEEN IS HERE.
YOUR MOTHER IS SAFE.
SO ARE YOUR BROTHERS.
THEY'RE ALL IN THE MAIN
CHAMBER.



LATER IN THE THRONE ROOM OF THE HIDDEN FORTRESS, QUEEN BREHA HOLDS AN IMPORTANT AUDIENCE...

THE SENATE HAS BEEN CORRUPTED.

THEY CANNOT RULE WITHOUT YOUR WISH.

I RULE BY MARRIAGE. WITH THE KING DEAD, I AM NOT STRONG ENOUGH TO STOP THEM. LEIA IS NOW THE TRUE QUEEN.

SHE MUST BE PROTECTED. THE LINE MUST BE PRESERVED!

GENERAL, YOU MUST DELIVER LEIA AND HER BROTHERS TO THE **OPHUCHI** SYSTEM. THEY WILL BE SAFE THERE. GENERAL, THE CHROME COMPANIES ON OPHUCHI...

...HAVE OFFERED TO SUPPLY YOU WITH THE MEN AND SHIPS NECESSARY TO RETURN LEIA TO THE THRONE.

MOTHER, YOU MUST NOT STAY!

I AM TOO OLD FOR SUCH A LONG JOURNEY. AND IT WON'T BE EASY. THE EMPIRE ALREADY CONTROLS THE SPACEPORT CITIES, AND I MUST LEAD THE EVACUATION OF OUR PALACE HOME.

WE WILL HAVE TO TRAVEL IN DISGUISE. NO ONE CAN SUSPECT WEALTH OR ROYAL TRAINING...AND I MUST HAVE **FULL** COMMAND. I FEAR THE NEW QUEEN WILL NOT STAND FOR THIS.

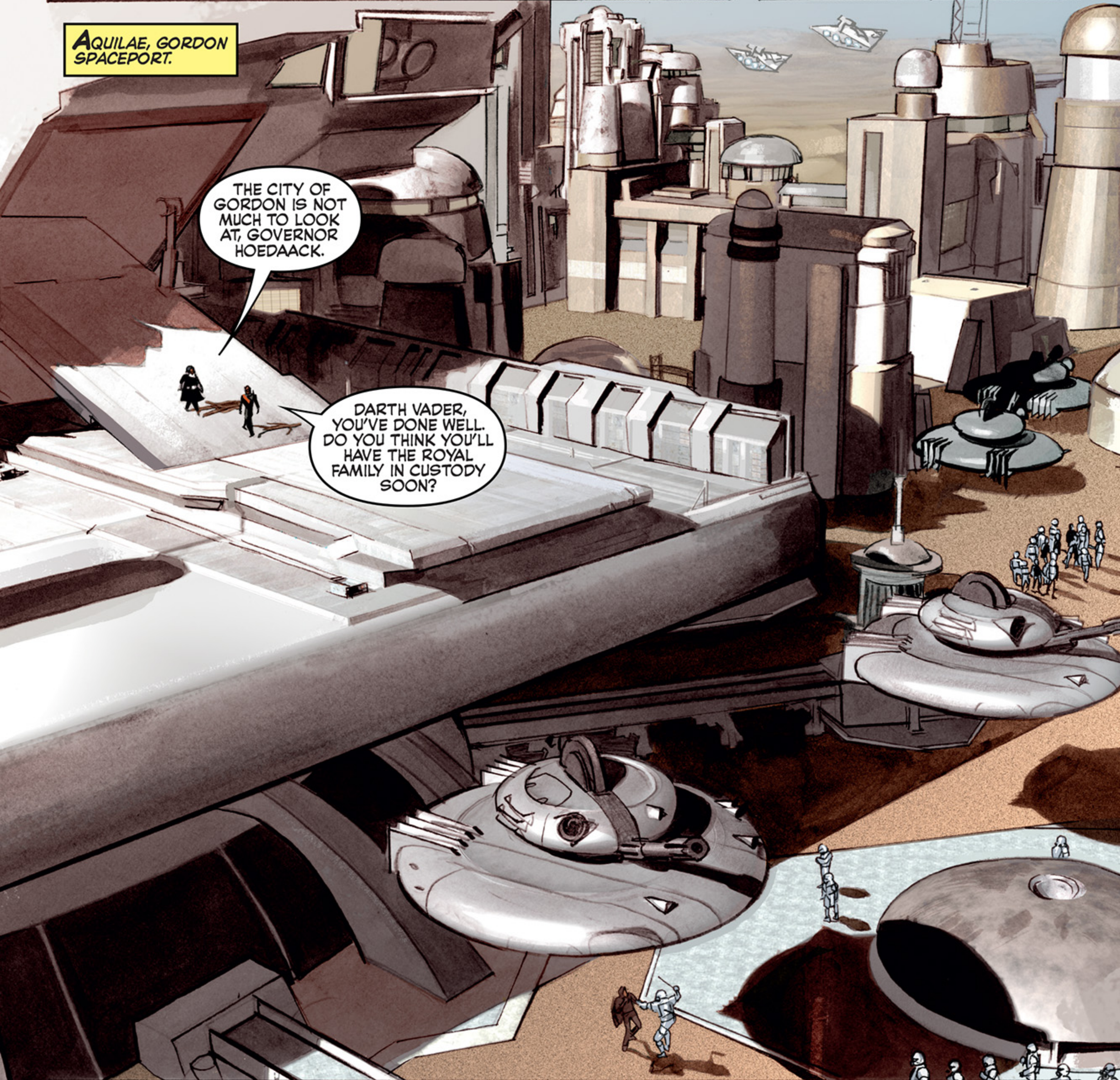
DO NOT PUT WORDS INTO MY MOUTH! I WILL DO WHAT IS NECESSARY!

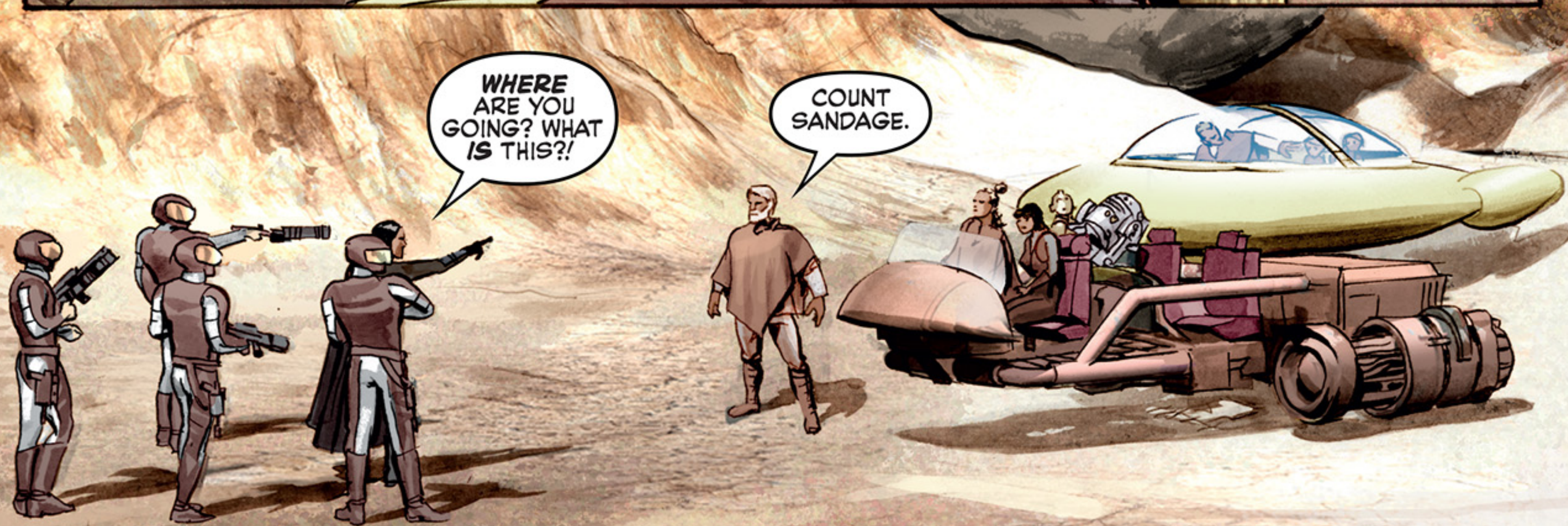
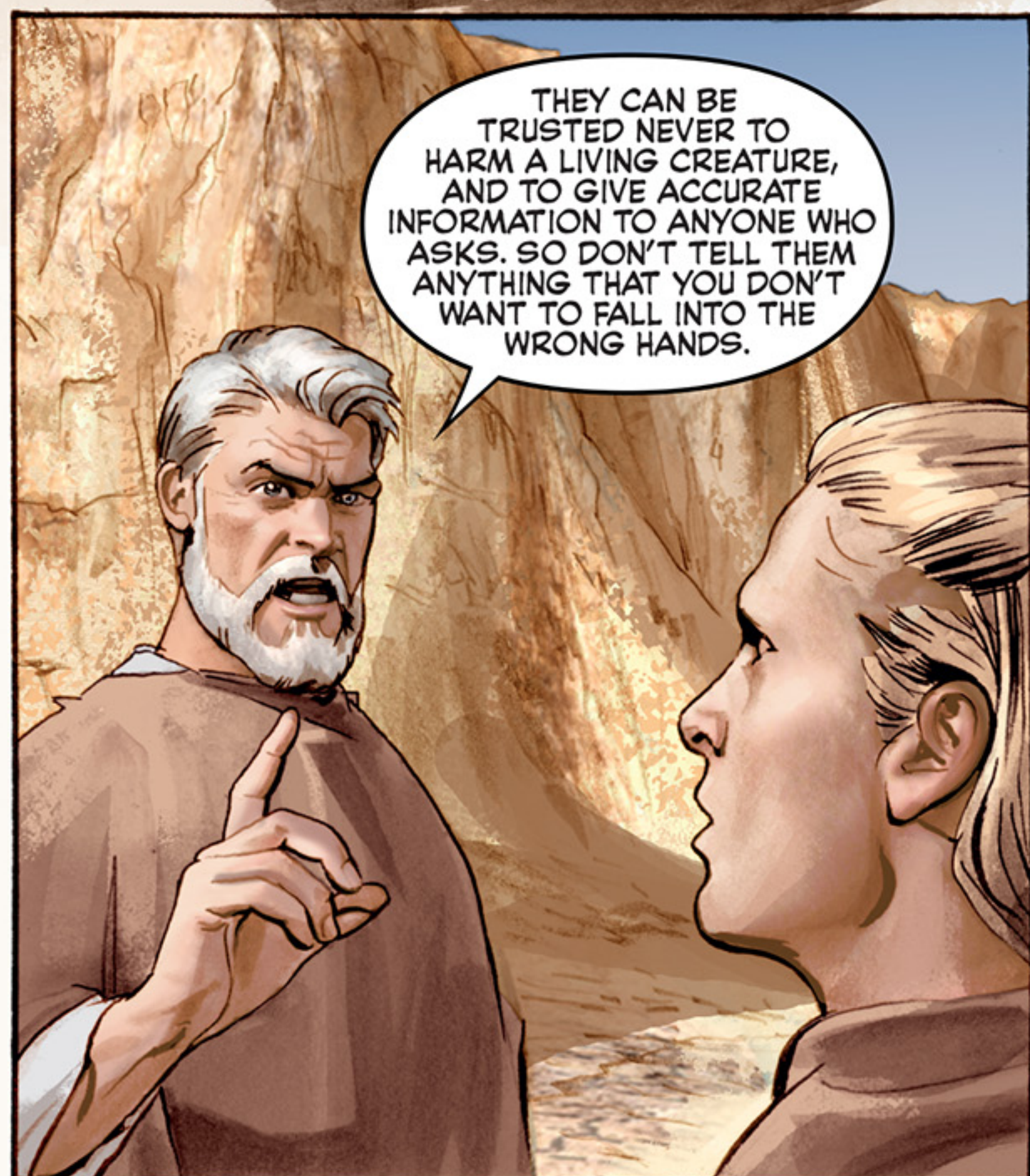
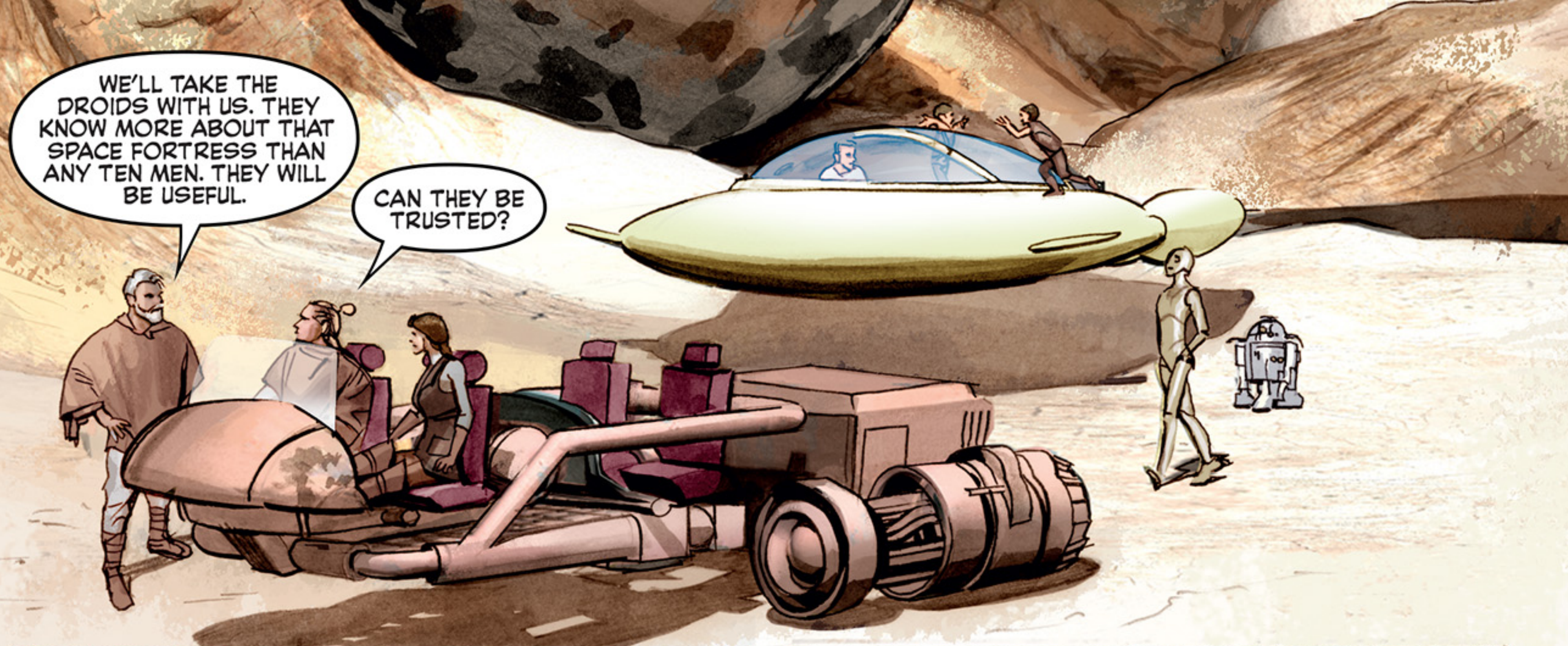
GO NOW. MAY THE FORCE OF OTHERS BE WITH YOU.

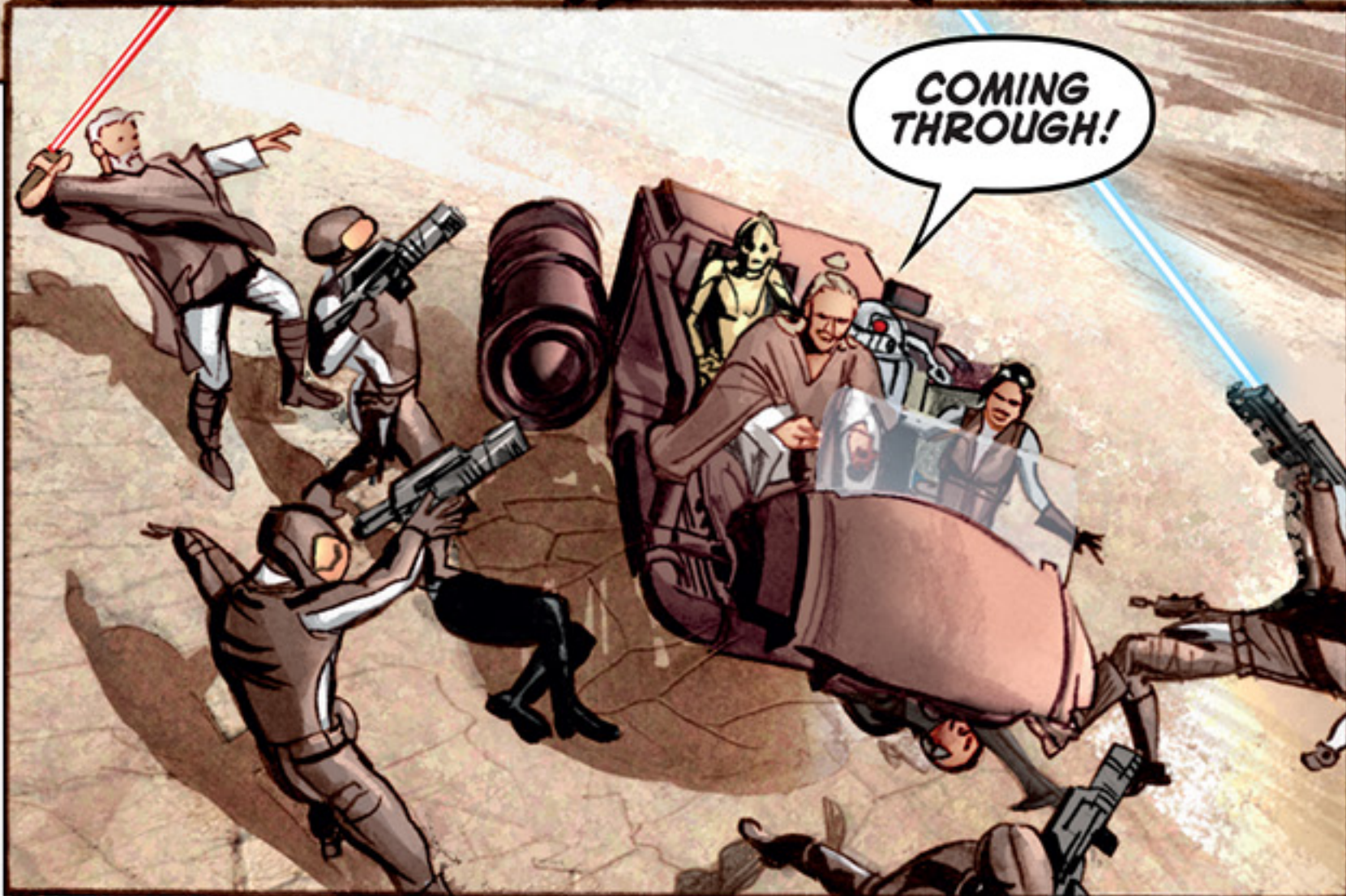
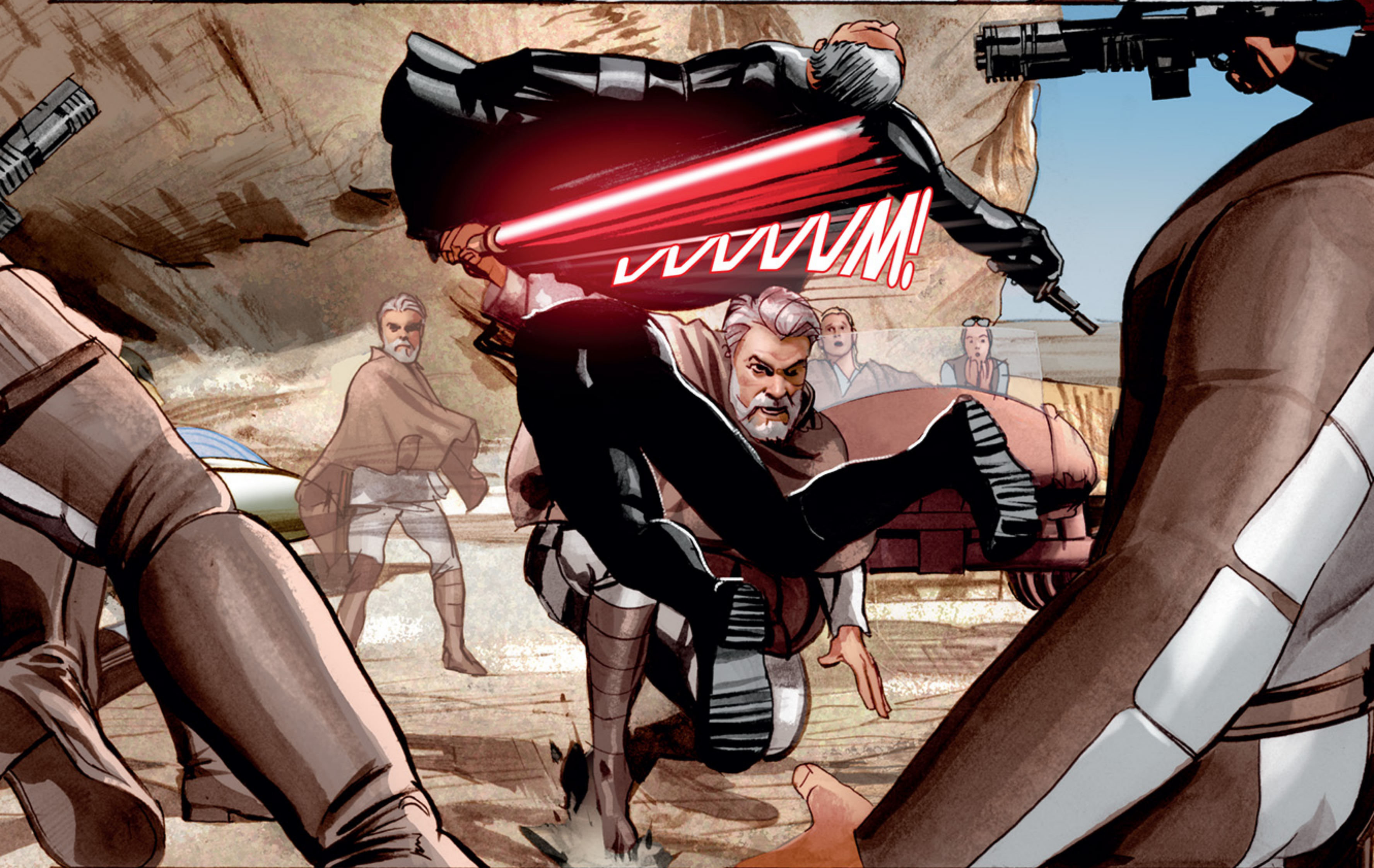
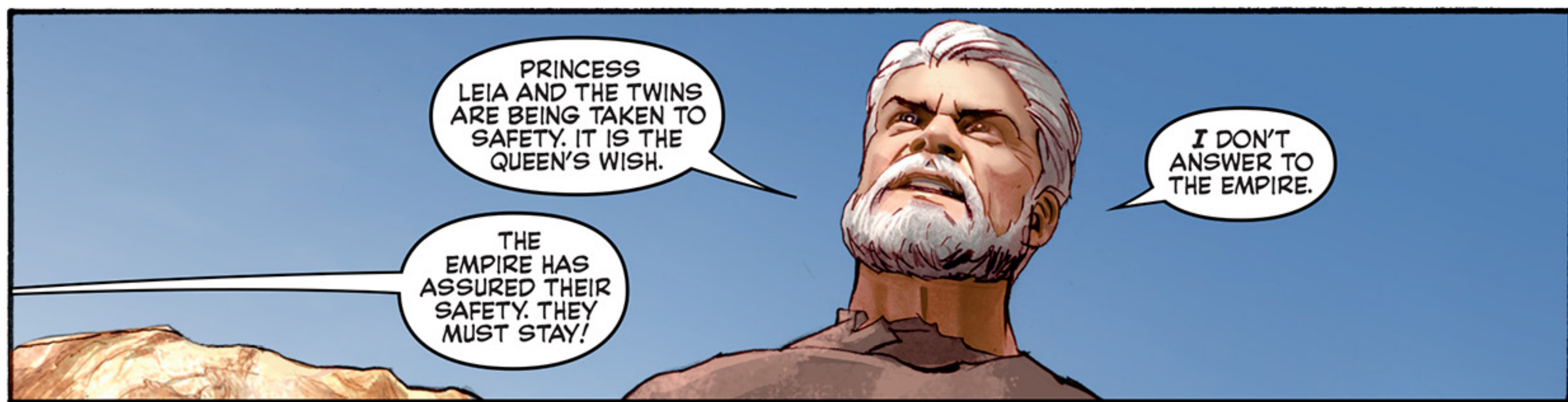
MOTHER...



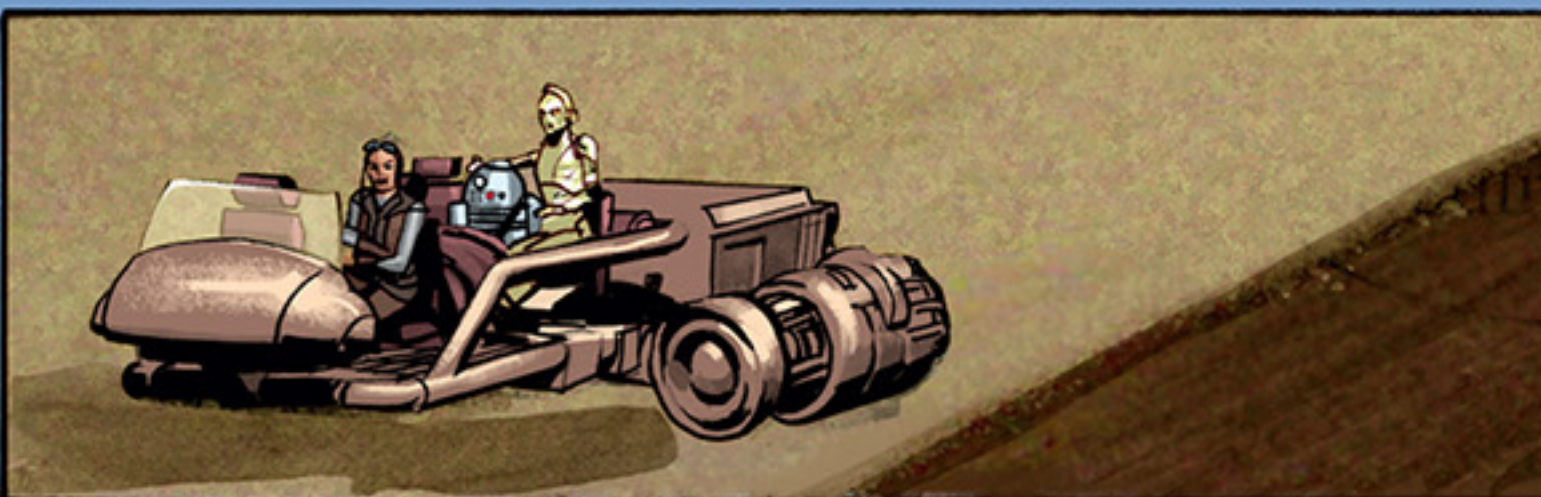
AQUILAE, GORDON SPACEPORT.

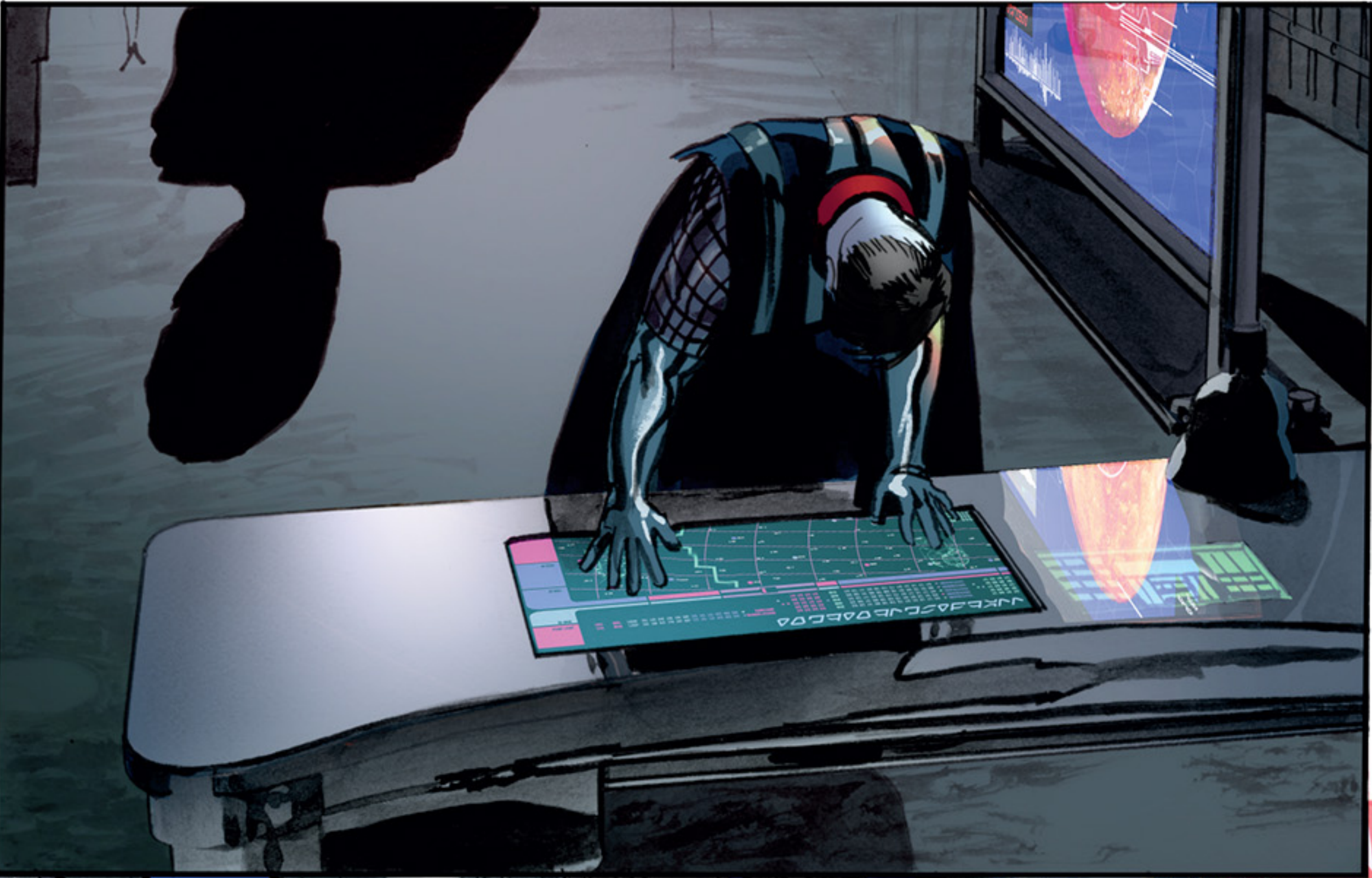


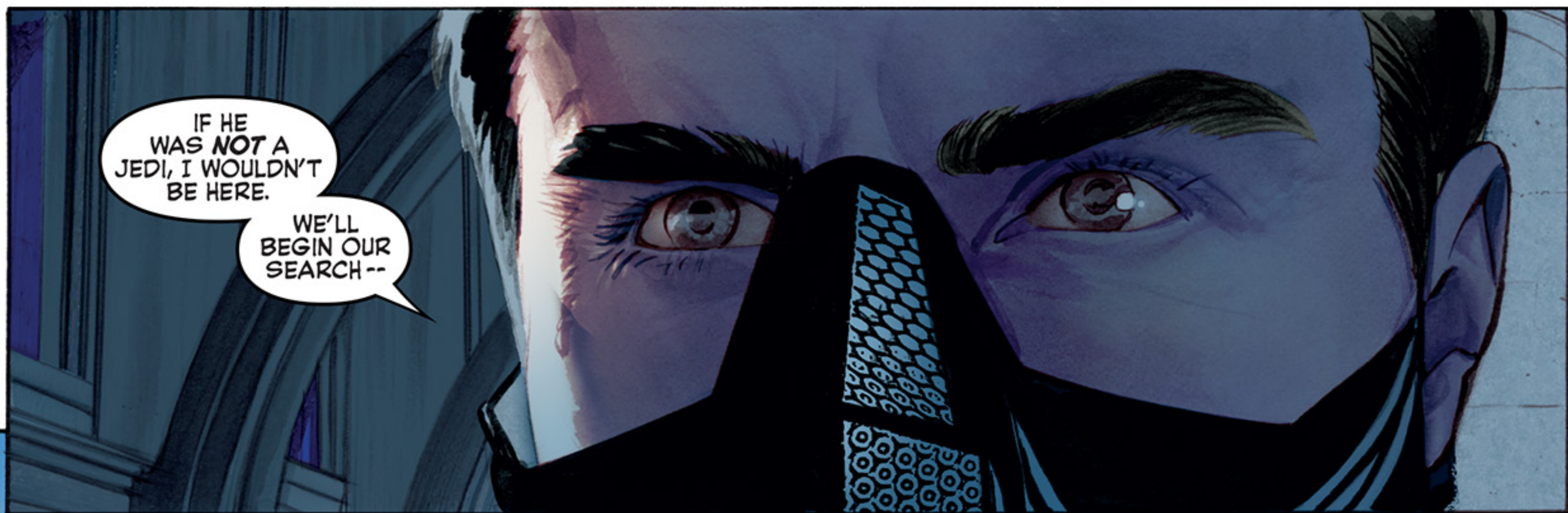




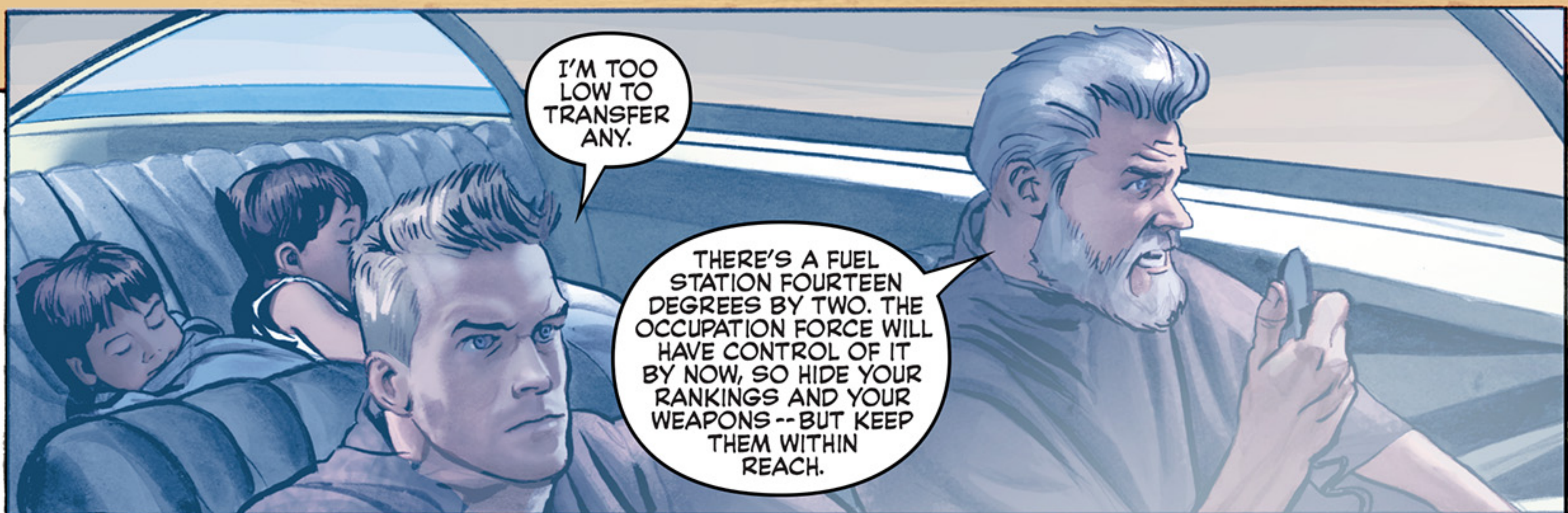
SHORTLY...

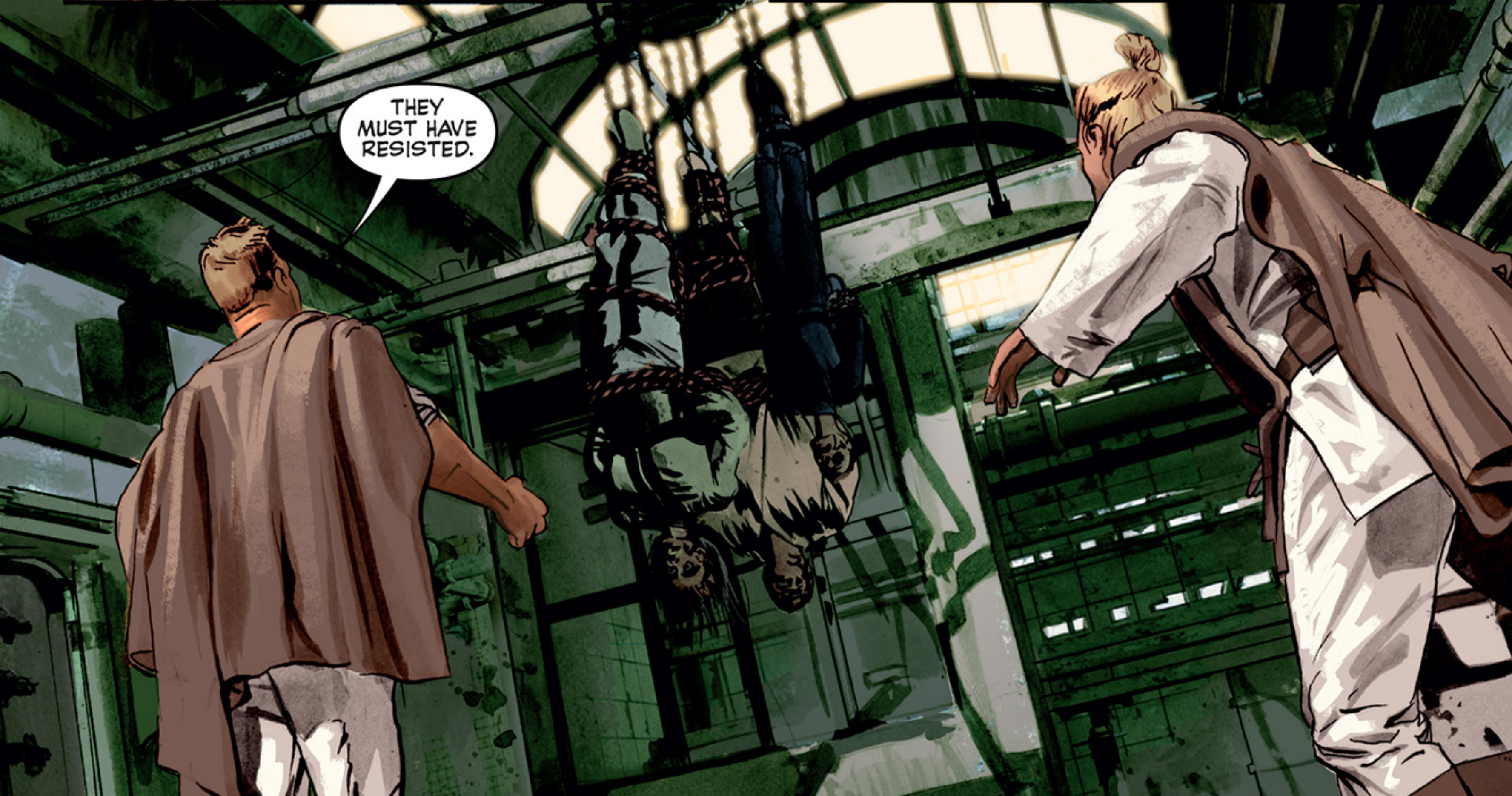
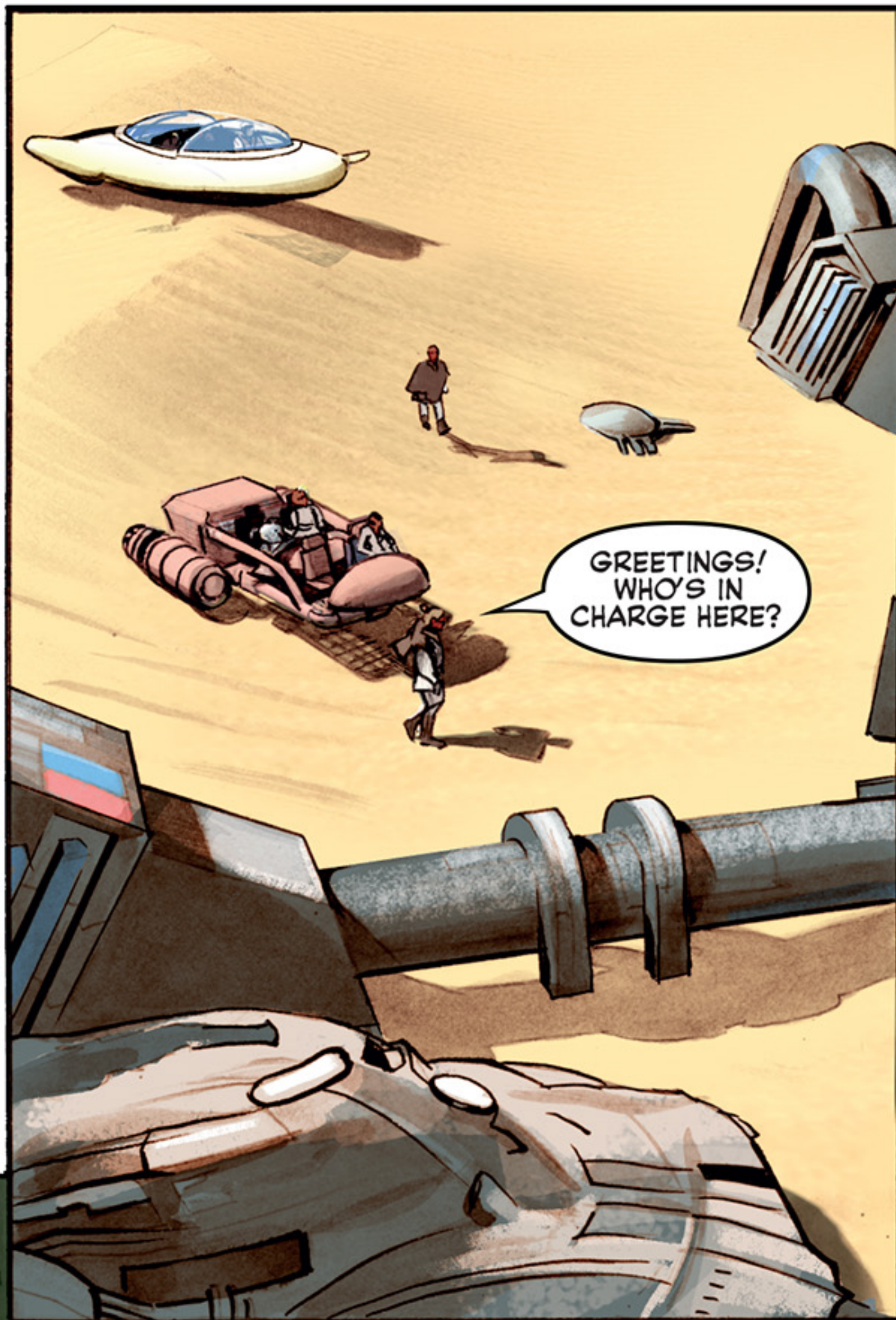
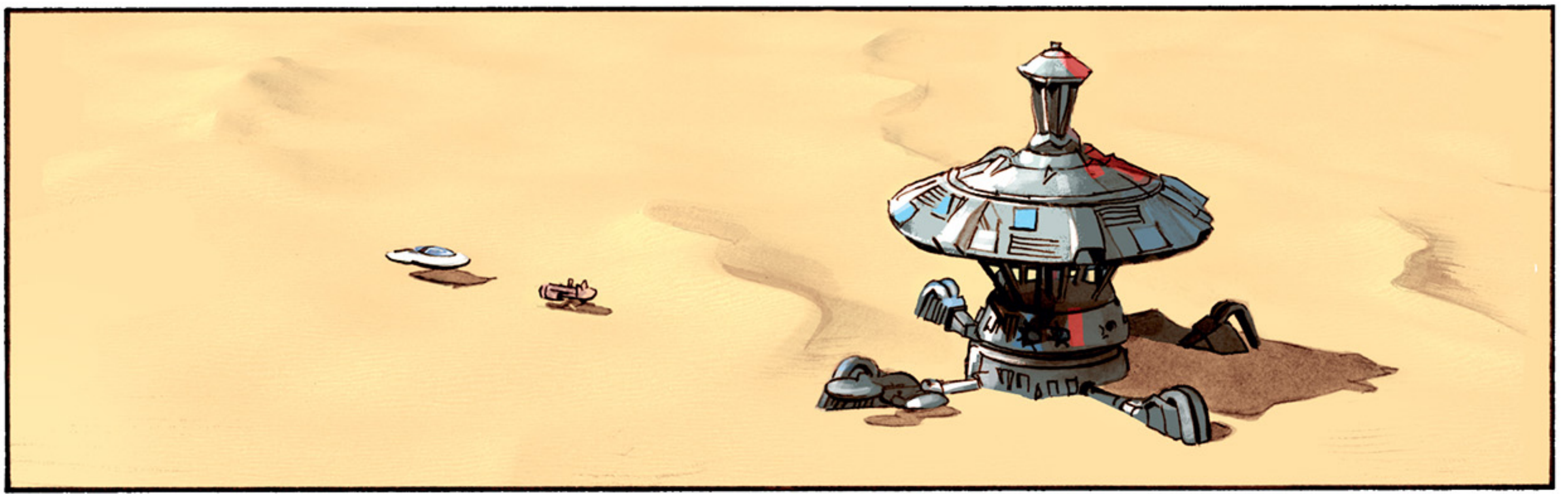


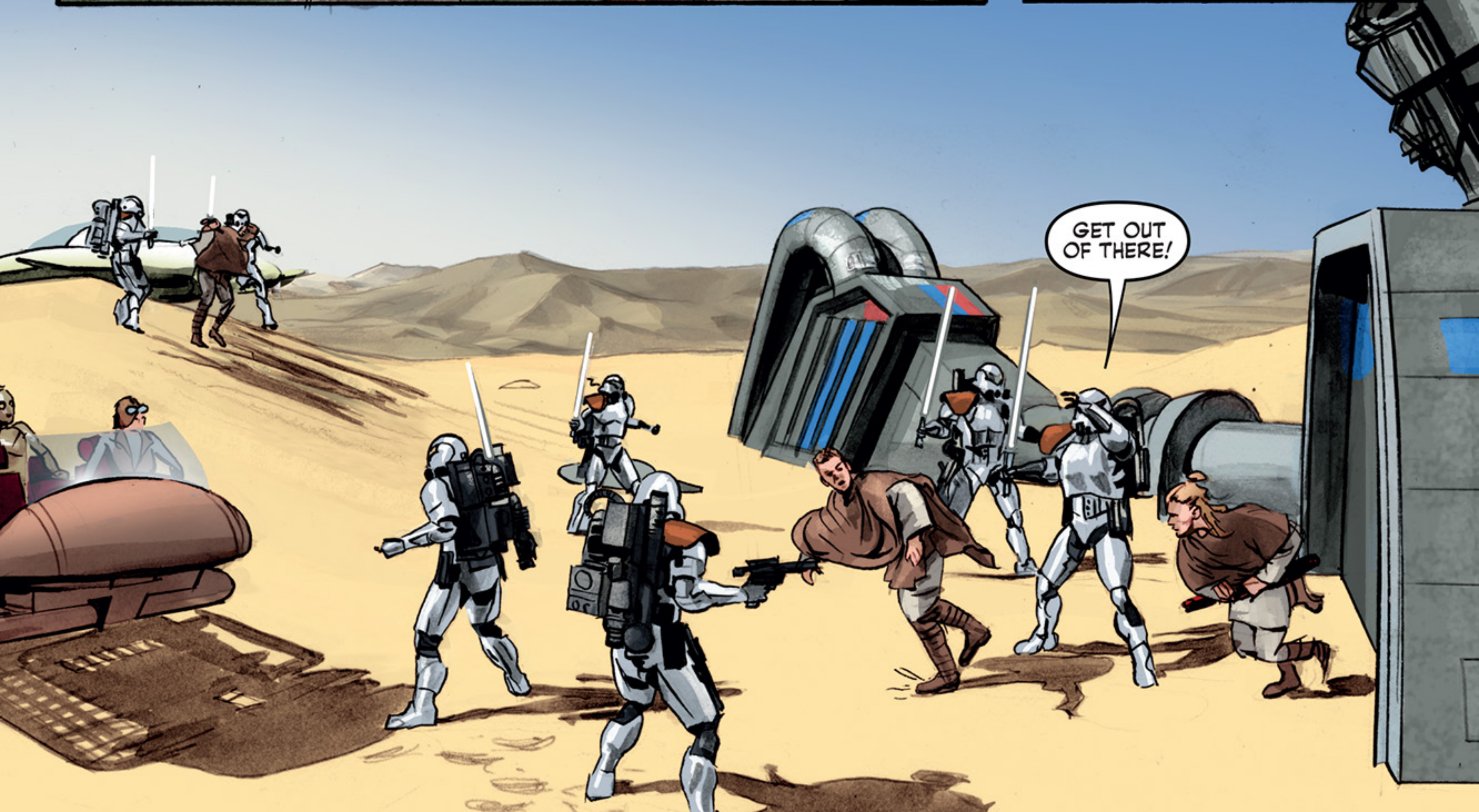


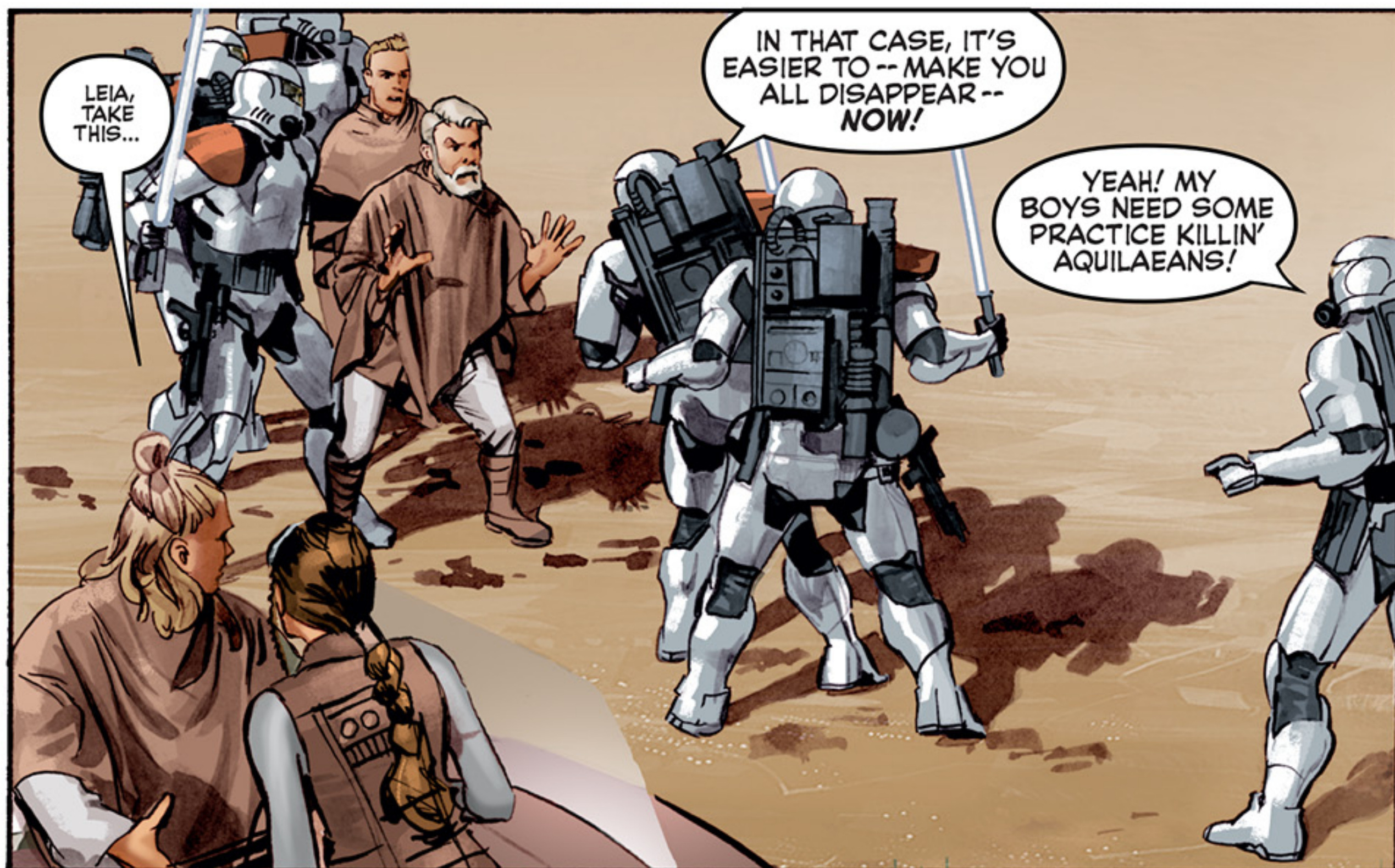
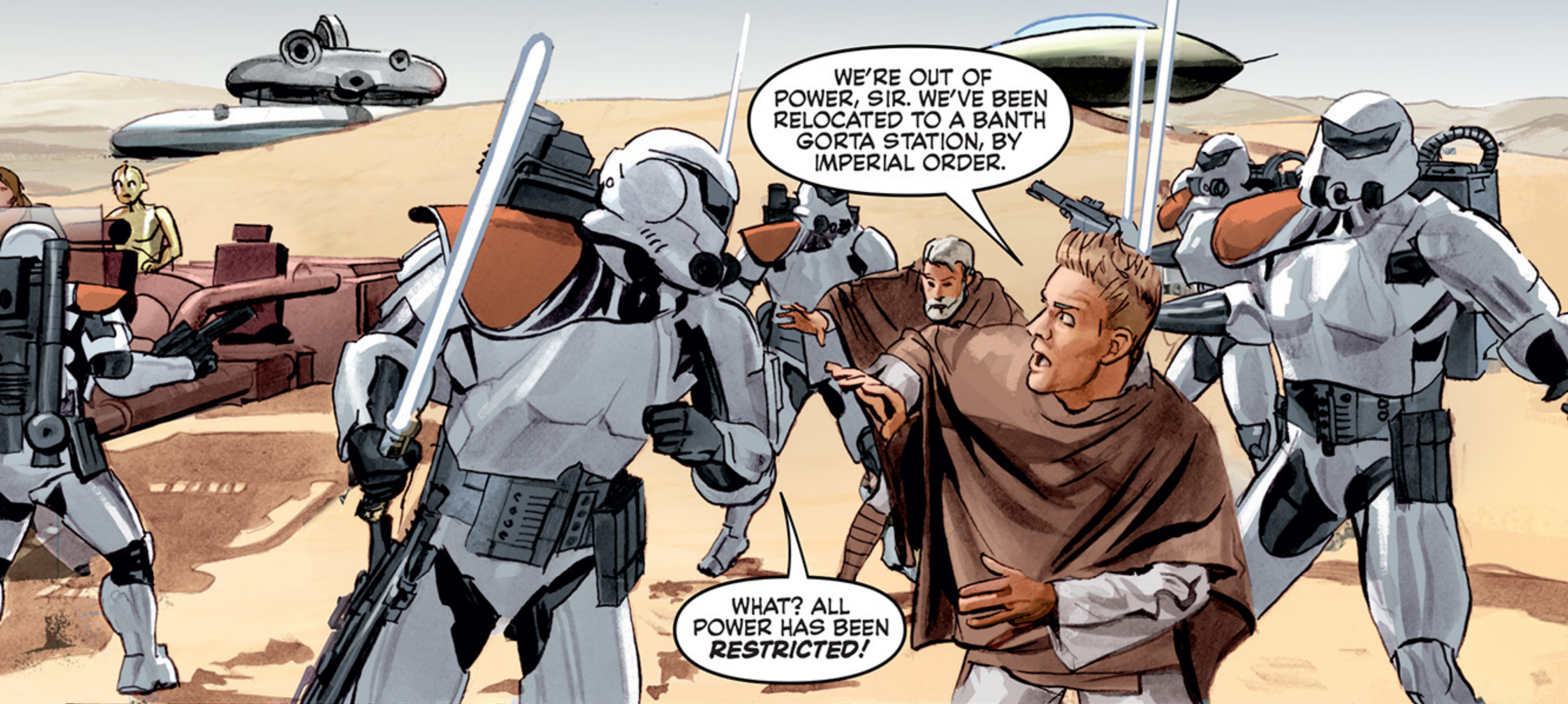


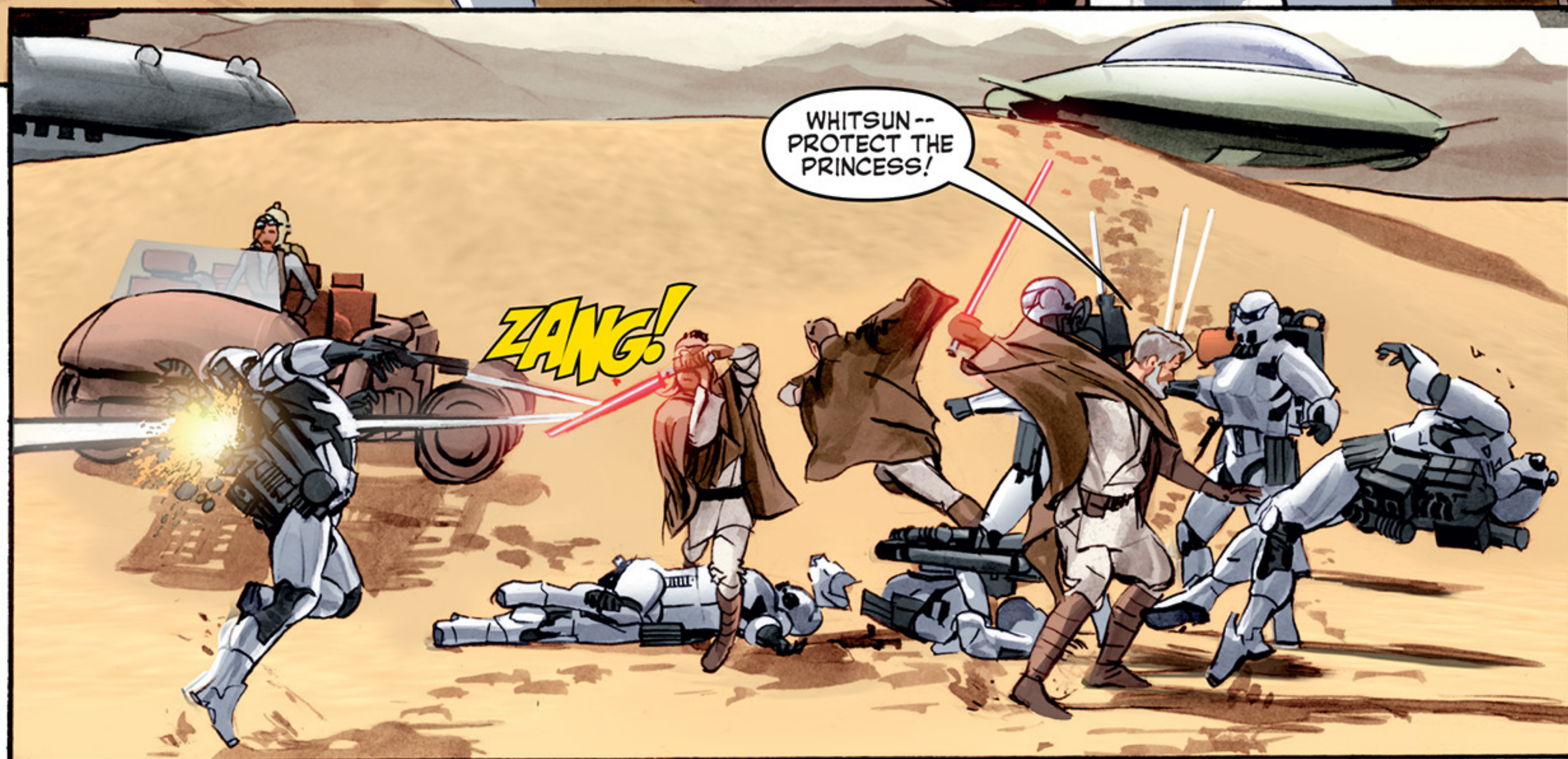
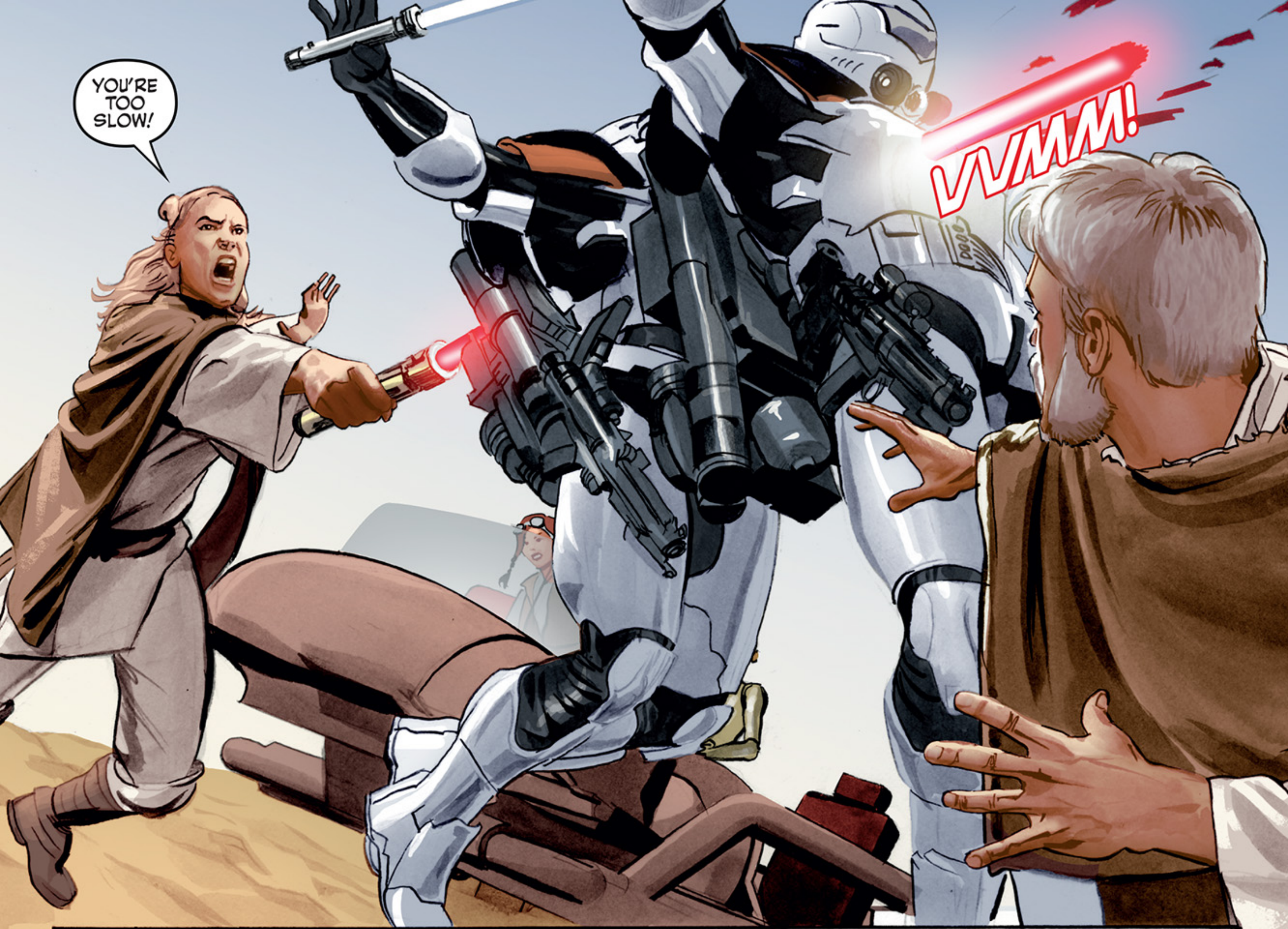
"-- AT DAWN..."

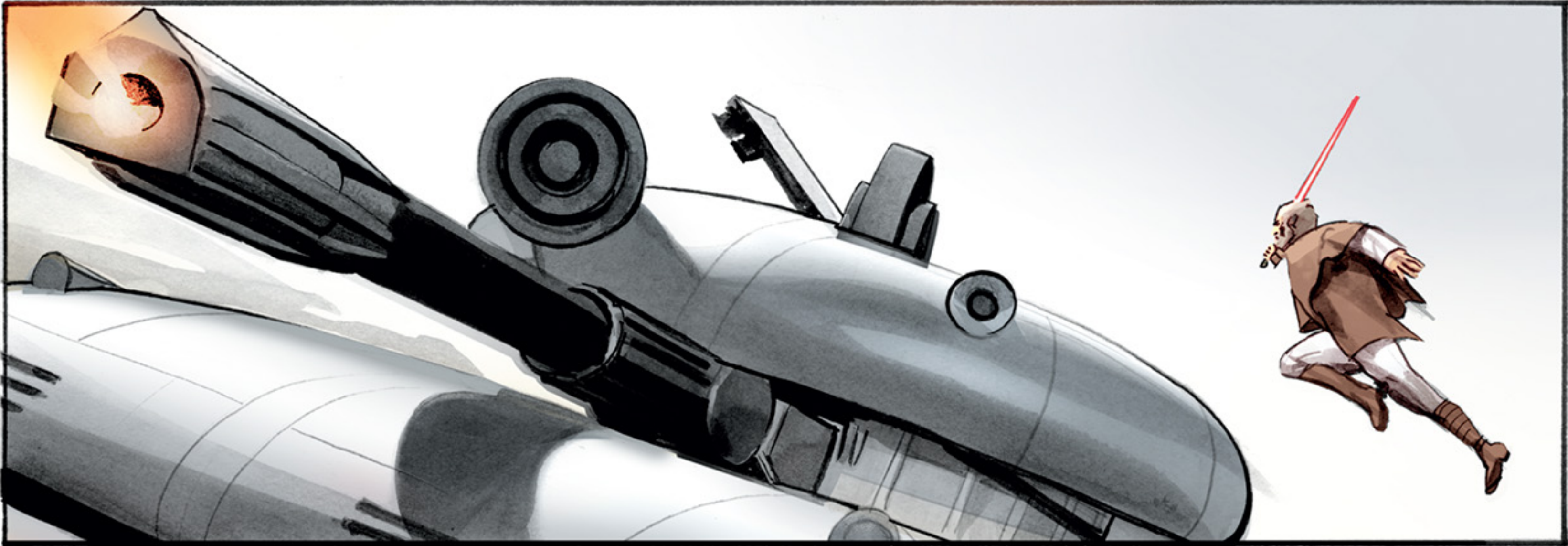
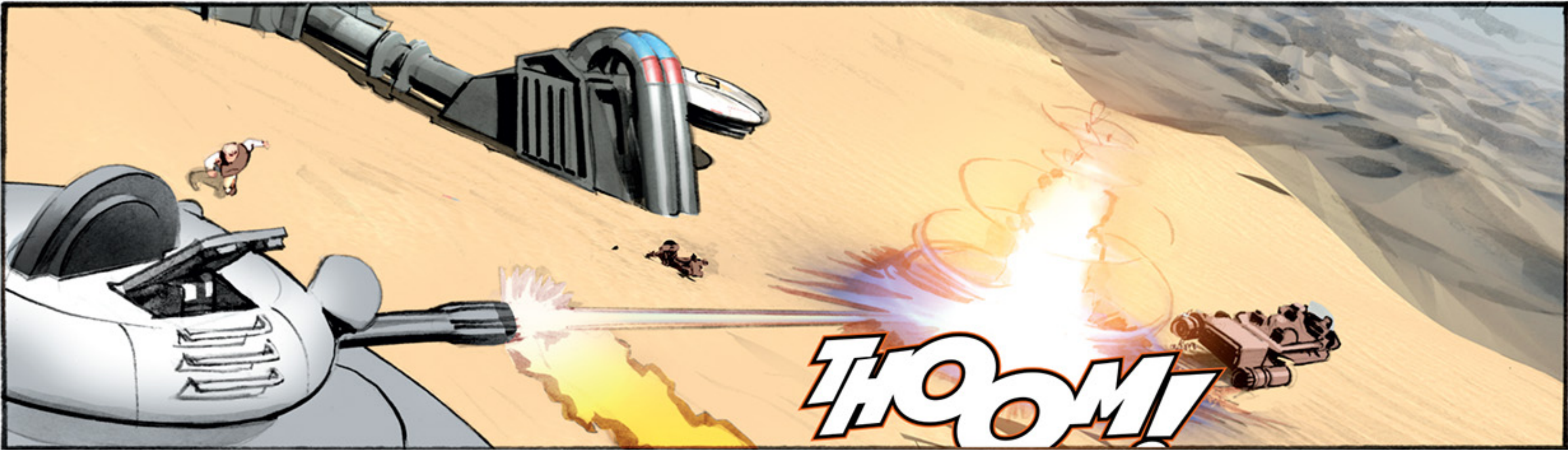
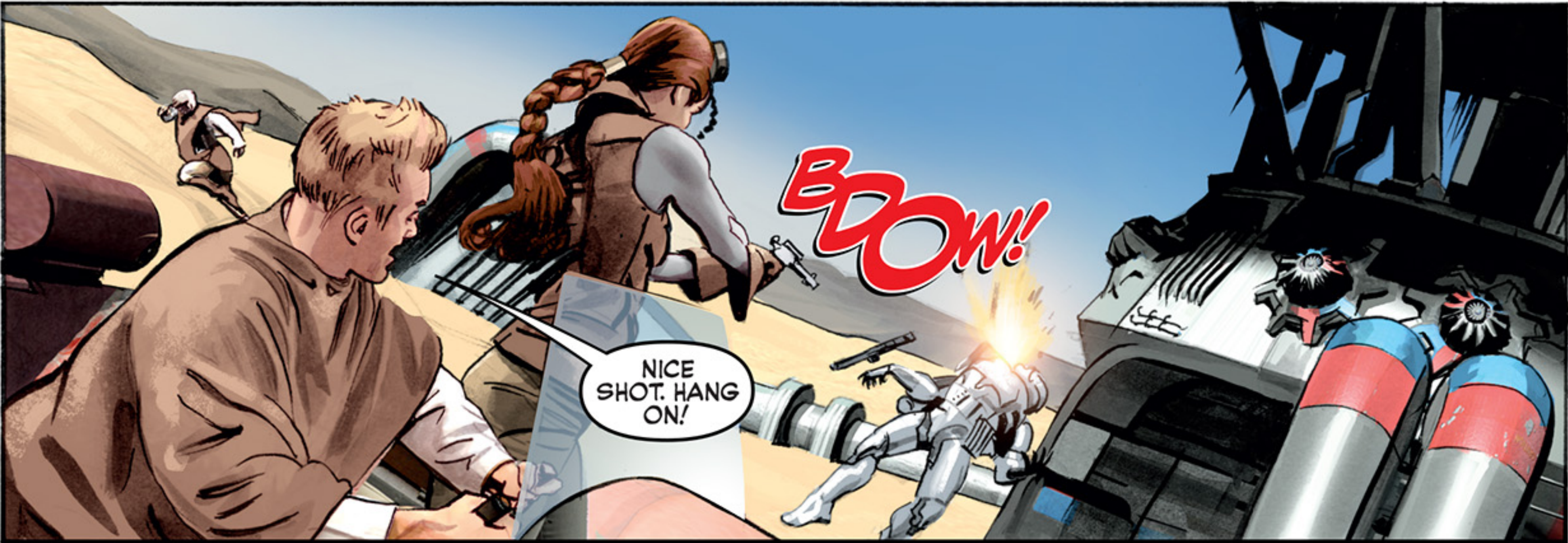


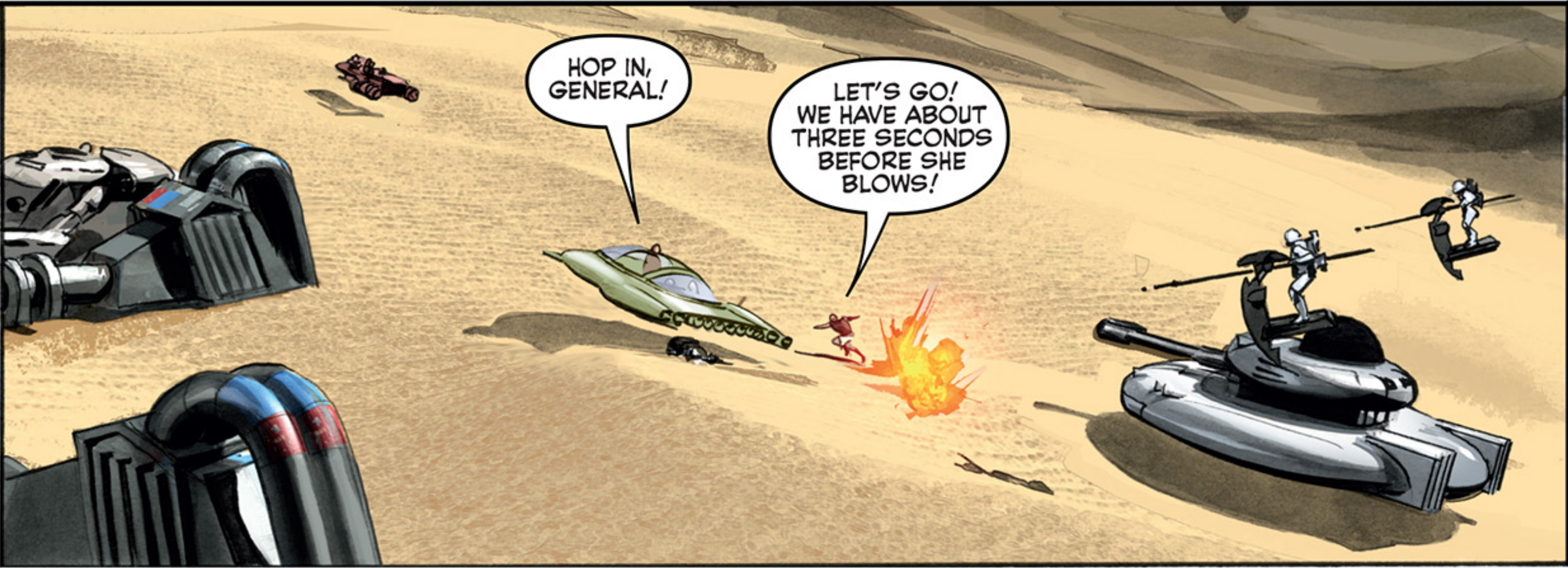
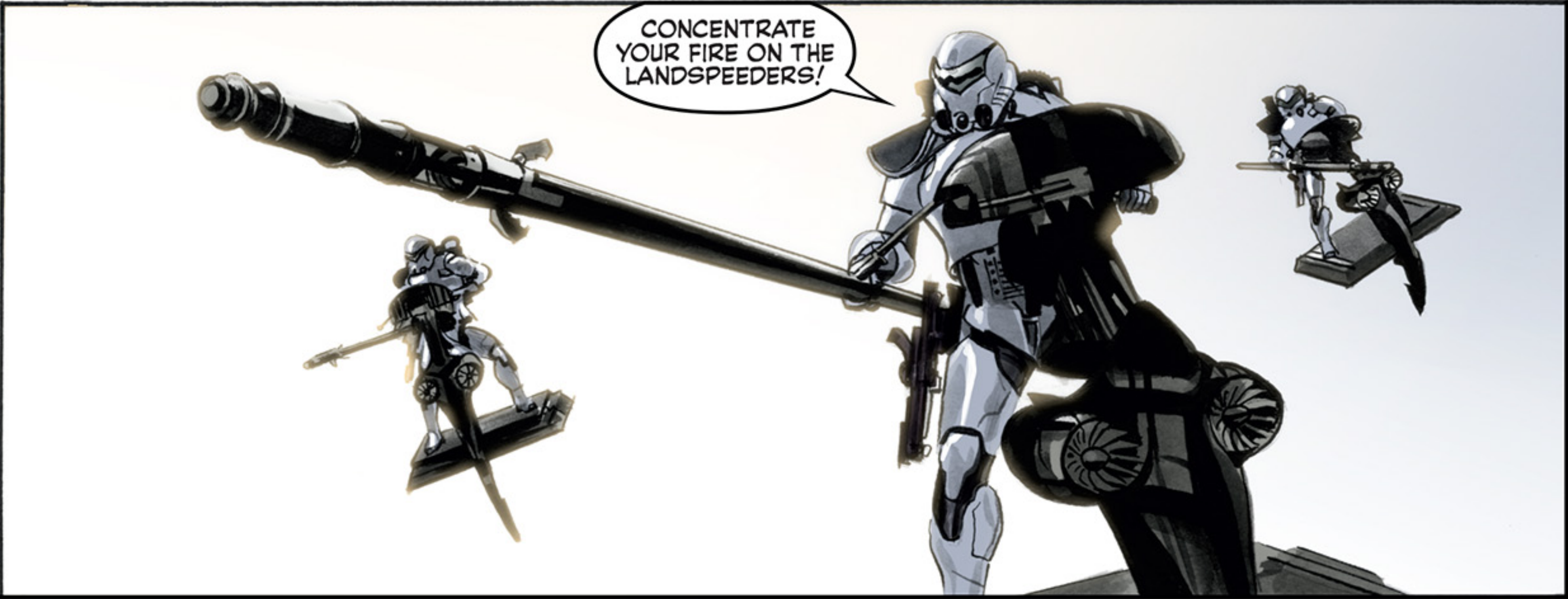
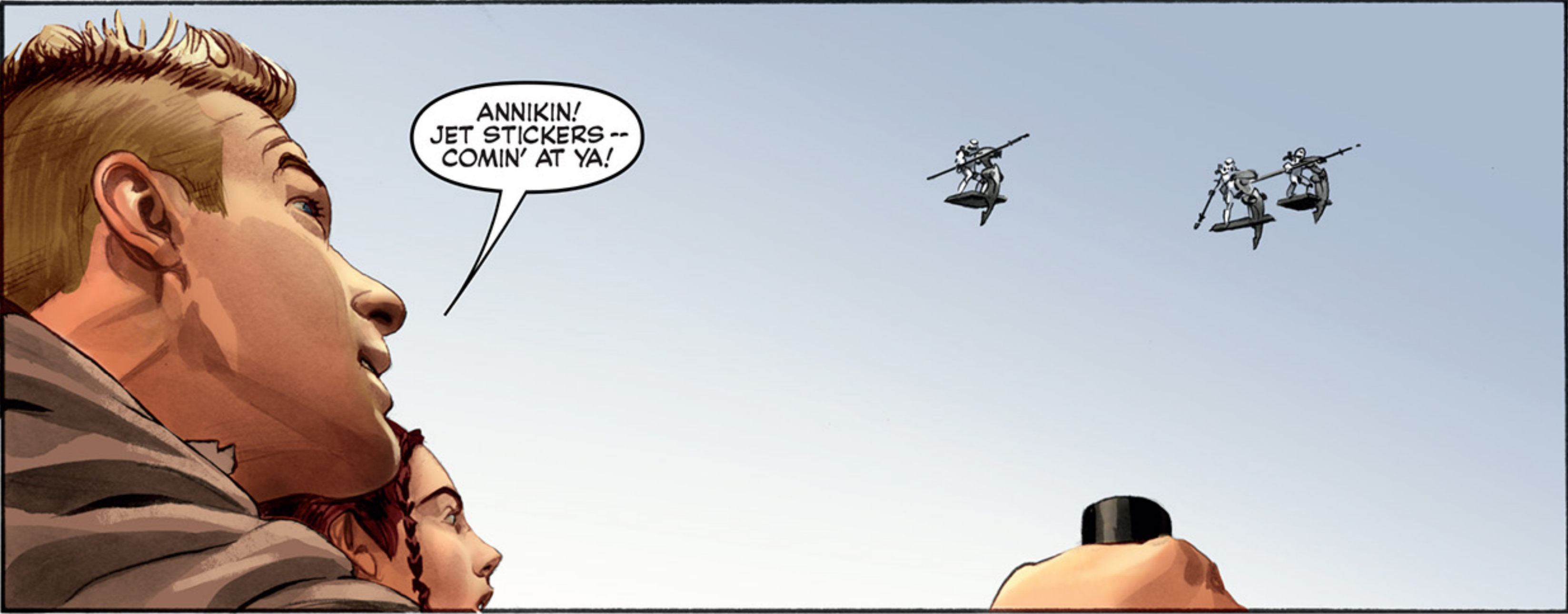
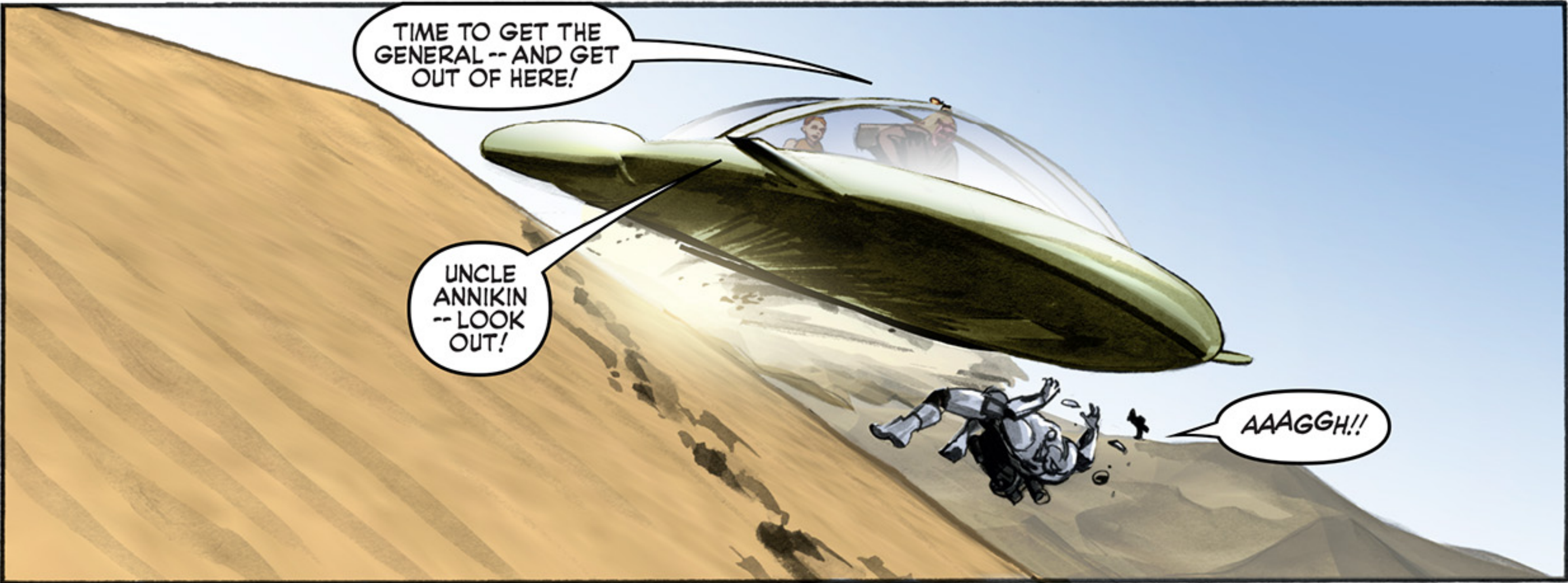


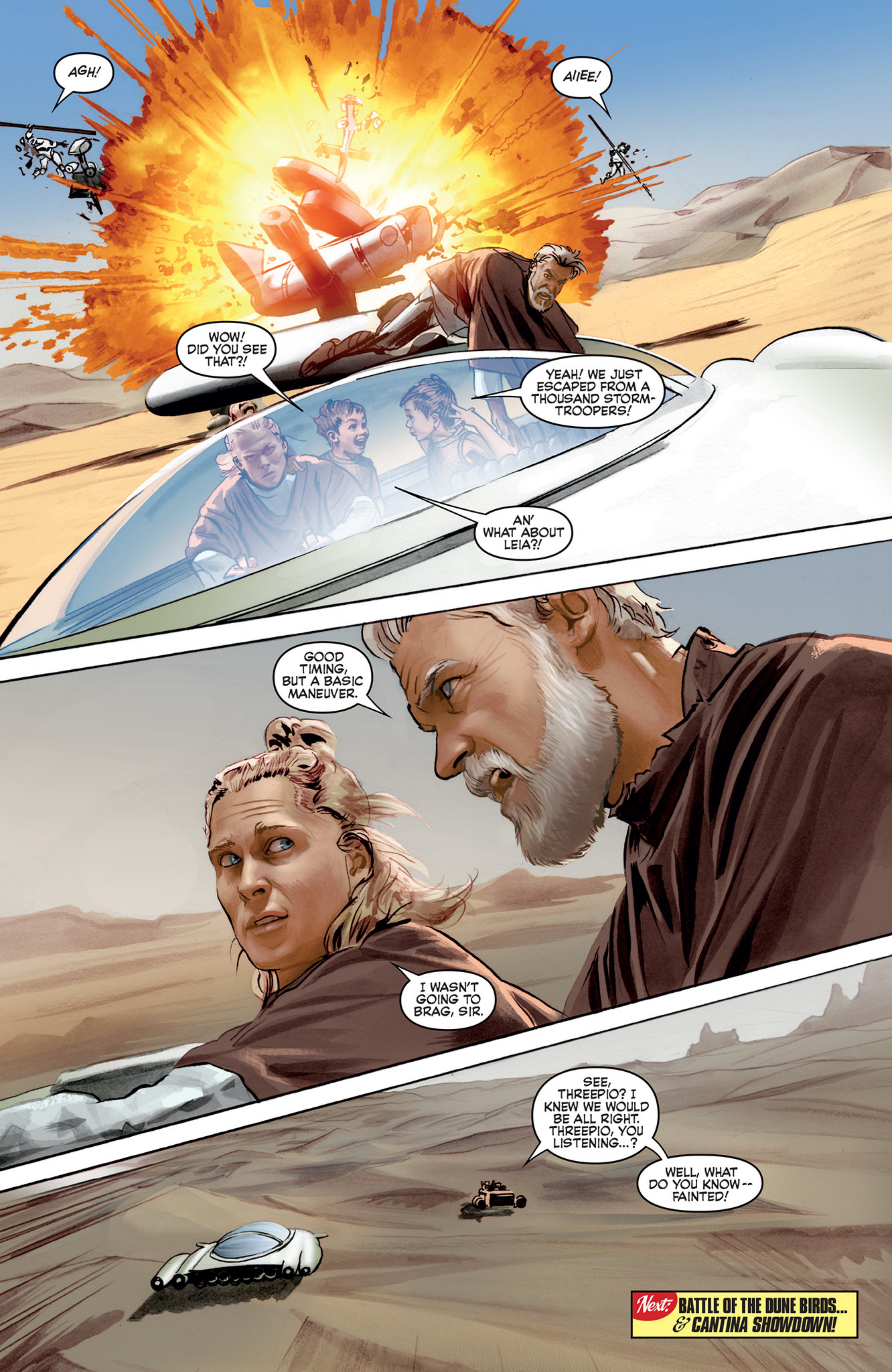












AGH!

AIIEE!

WOW!
DID YOU SEE
THAT?!

YEAH! WE JUST
ESCAPED FROM A
THOUSAND STORM-
TROOPERS!

AN'
WHAT ABOUT
LEIA?!

GOOD
TIMING,
BUT A BASIC
MANEUVER.

I WASN'T
GOING TO
BRAG, SIR.

SEE,
THREEPIO? I
KNEW WE WOULD
BE ALL RIGHT.
THREEPIO, YOU
LISTENING...?

WELL, WHAT
DO YOU KNOW--
FAINTED!

Next: **BATTLE OF THE DUNE BIRDS...
& CANTINA SHOWDOWN!**

THE STAR WARS

The Star Wars

c/o Dark Horse Comics
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starwars@darkhorse.com
Boards.DarkHorse.com

As I write these words, the release of issue #2 of The Star Wars is still a week away, so I'm relying here on more of the letters and e-mail messages we received for the first issue. Fortunately, there are a lot of them. Your responses have been gratifying, and your enthusiasm has given the whole team a boost. Keep the comments coming!

This first issue of *The Star Wars* is simply amazing. J. W. Rinzler instantly sucked me in. It really is a whole new kind of story, sprinkled heavily with *Star Wars* seasoning, and yet, this is what came first. I found myself wanting to know more about everyone. Already there's a ton of unmentioned history behind everything.

I was also impressed with the depth of caring all the characters have for each other and their children. Everyone seems like they are whole new characters with familiar names. I'm sure as things advance, more similarities will surface. Annikin already gives me that vibe that he feels his father pays more attention to his younger and more gifted brother Deak. My only gripe is that the pacing felt kind of fast, but again, this is the first issue and there are a lot of parties to be introduced.

Mike Mayhew did a phenomenal job on the art. The level of design is off the chart. I love how there are so many *Star Wars* elements repurposed in the costumes, ships, and locations. I love the 1940s feel, too. There are shadows and reflections everywhere, giving everything and everyone weight on the page. Rain Beredo's palette really compliments Mike's work and the feel of the book. This is a beautiful comic.

Mike Miller

I have long maintained that the most amazing visuals and mind-blowing concepts don't mean a thing unless the audience cares about the characters. Thanks for highlighting that, Mike!

I am really looking forward to more issues and I absolutely loved this first issue. Never was really a big *Star Wars* comic-book collector, but once I heard about *The Star Wars* being made into a comic, I knew I had to get in on it. Mayhew's artwork and illustrations are just fantastic and beautiful. Keep up the wonderful and amazing work, guys.

Andrew Chapman

You have taken your first steps into a larger world, Andrew. Don't deny yourself exposure to some of our other great Star Wars comics.

I can't believe I am holding a comic book that consists of artwork and a story that has only been projected as vague imagery on my mind's movie screen. I would spend hours staring at the McQuarrie *Star Wars* art portfolios after receiving them as Christmas presents back in the late seventies and early eighties. The essence of that artwork has been brought to life by Mike Mayhew. He has done a superb job. Issue #1 is beautiful! Nick Runge has perfectly captured the feel of the classic *Star Wars* movie posters we all know so well. The cover art is incredible!

Translating the rough draft of *The Star Wars* into a comic book must have been a monumental task. There was no better choice than J. W. Rinzler to perform that task. He has done a terrific job! Congratulations to all involved in the creation of a miniseries that deserves a place of honor in any *Star Wars* collection. I eagerly await the future issues of *The Star Wars*.

Mark T.

Thank you, Mark. When adapting any story from another medium, you always worry that your visual presentation of imagined characters and settings won't match up with the world built up in the readers' minds. In this case, it seems, our worries were unfounded. Hope you like future issues as much as you did the first!

Wonderful! Spectacular! Cinematic! I really enjoyed *The Star Wars* #1: beautiful art and an action-packed beginning.

It's interesting to see that the political machinations which were so present during the prequel films were also present in full bloom when Lucas was writing the script that ultimately evolved into Episode IV.

Congrats to everyone who worked on this project and, as a lifelong fan, my sincere thanks for a job well done. I'm already looking forward to next month's installment of this series.

Michael Harlow

As I mentioned in a Horsepower column a few months back, working on this project has opened my eyes to George Lucas's amazing ability to adapt

and maintain concepts across numerous rewrites. In my experience, this is a rare ability (certainly one I don't possess!).

It's exciting to have something *Star Wars* that's both classic and new. I remember picking up the *Star Wars* novelization when I was a little boy and feeling something distinctly exciting through those words. When General Skywalker greeted Kane Starkiller with "You old muscle-rat!" something about it was so genuinely classic *Star Wars*, it brought me back. Like seeing Luke greet Biggs on Yavin IV before the Death Star, but with new characters to know, new adventures ahead. I'm looking forward to more new, classic *Star Wars*!

Jeshua

I know the feeling, Jeshua—it's like nostalgia for something you've never seen before.

What can I say, *The Star Wars* is by far one of the best-looking *Star Wars* comics ever. More importantly, it is almost as if Ralph McQuarrie has returned through Mike's stunning art.

I've read all the drafts of *Star Wars*, and the universe I pictured in my head is here in vivid color. Rinzler's adaptation is spot on. I wish this was going theatrical; it so feels like the pulp- and serial-inspired story *Star Wars* initially was. There's even a touch of the 1930s in the design. Hats off to all for a job well done.

One could hope for an alternate *Star Wars* universe to grow from here.

Mark Sonntag
Sydney, Australia

I think that's too much to hope for, Mark. We've seen how many times other companies' "alternate" lines have been revamped or restarted midstory. I think alternate continuities are best in small portions. Plus . . . well, see my comment after the letter below.

I'm loving this book so far! It's only one issue in, but it seems very promising. It feels like a completely new *Star Wars* story that I can become ridiculously attached to (just like the original)! What I want to ask is, is this book only based on the rough draft of *A New Hope*, or is it the whole trilogy?

Can't wait to read more. Keep up the good work!
Logan Slone

This story covers, more or less, only the events that became Star Wars: Episode IV—A New Hope, though as others have pointed out, there are elements of the prequel trilogy and, as you'll see in future issues, events that anticipate Return of the Jedi and other films.

You have to remember, Logan, when George wrote the draft we're adapting, he wasn't necessarily planning a trilogy (or even two or three trilogies), so the characters and situations in this story exist only in this draft. There is no corresponding draft of The Empire Strikes Back or ROTJ featuring these characters, and I don't foresee us ever wanting to "invent" them. At least, that is, without George Lucas's direct involvement.

Randy Stradley
editor

**Next Issue: More adventure
that you never saw in the films!!**



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Dawn of the Jedi:
Force War #1



Legacy #9



Star Wars #11



The Star Wars #3



Darth Vader & the
Ninth Assassin
HARDCOVER

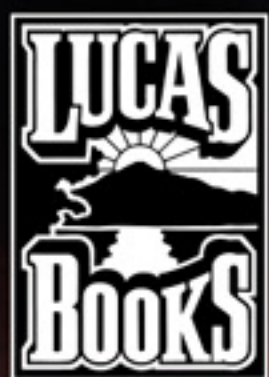


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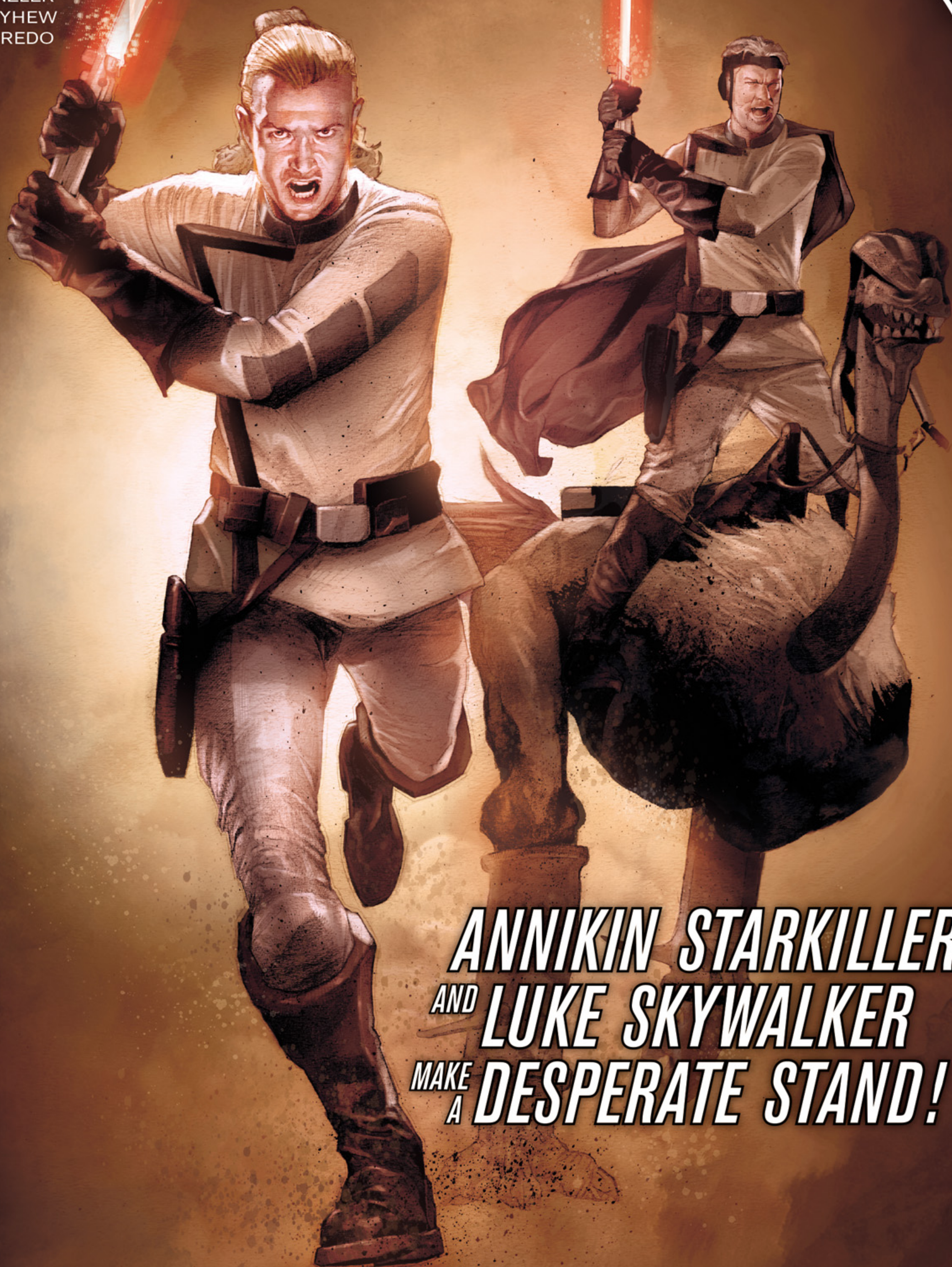
#4 |



RINZLER
MAYHEW
BEREDO

BASED ON THE ORIGINAL ROUGH-DRAFT SCREENPLAY BY GEORGE LUCAS

THE STAR WARS



**ANNIKIN STARKILLER
AND LUKE SKYWALKER
MAKE A DESPERATE STAND!**

ADAPTED FROM THE ORIGINAL ROUGH-DRAFT SCREENPLAY BY GEORGE LUCAS

THE STAR WARS™

A devastating attack by the Empire's Space Fortress has left the planet Aquilae defenseless. Imperial General Darth Vader sends troops to capture Princess Leia, who is Aquilae's monarch now that her father, the king, has been killed in the bombardment.

Jedi General Luke Skywalker, Padawan Annikin Starkiller, and Agent Whitsun hastily arrange to spirit Leia and her two young brothers to the safety of the Ophuchi system. Learning of their escape, Vader enlists a new ally—Prince Valorum, a Knight of the Sith and sworn enemy of the Jedi.

After a battle with a platoon of stormtroopers in the desert, Skywalker's group races with even more urgency to the spaceport at Gordon, where he must rendezvous with Ureallian smuggler Han Solo to find a way off planet . . .

SCRIPT
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MIKE MAYHEW

COLORS
RAIN BEREDO

LETTERING
MICHAEL HEISLER

COVER
NICK RUNGE

DESIGNER
JIMMY PRESLER

ASSISTANT EDITOR
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EDITOR
RANDY STRADLEY

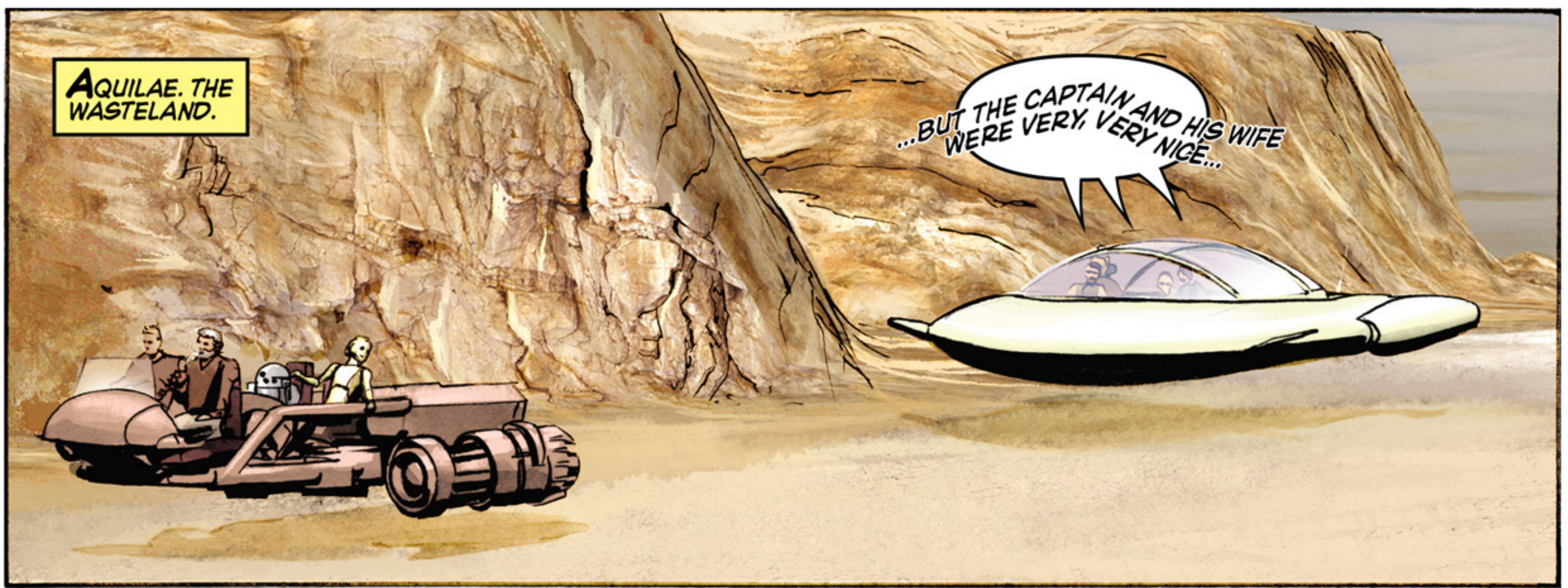
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MIKE RICHARDSON

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AQUILAE. THE WASTELAND.

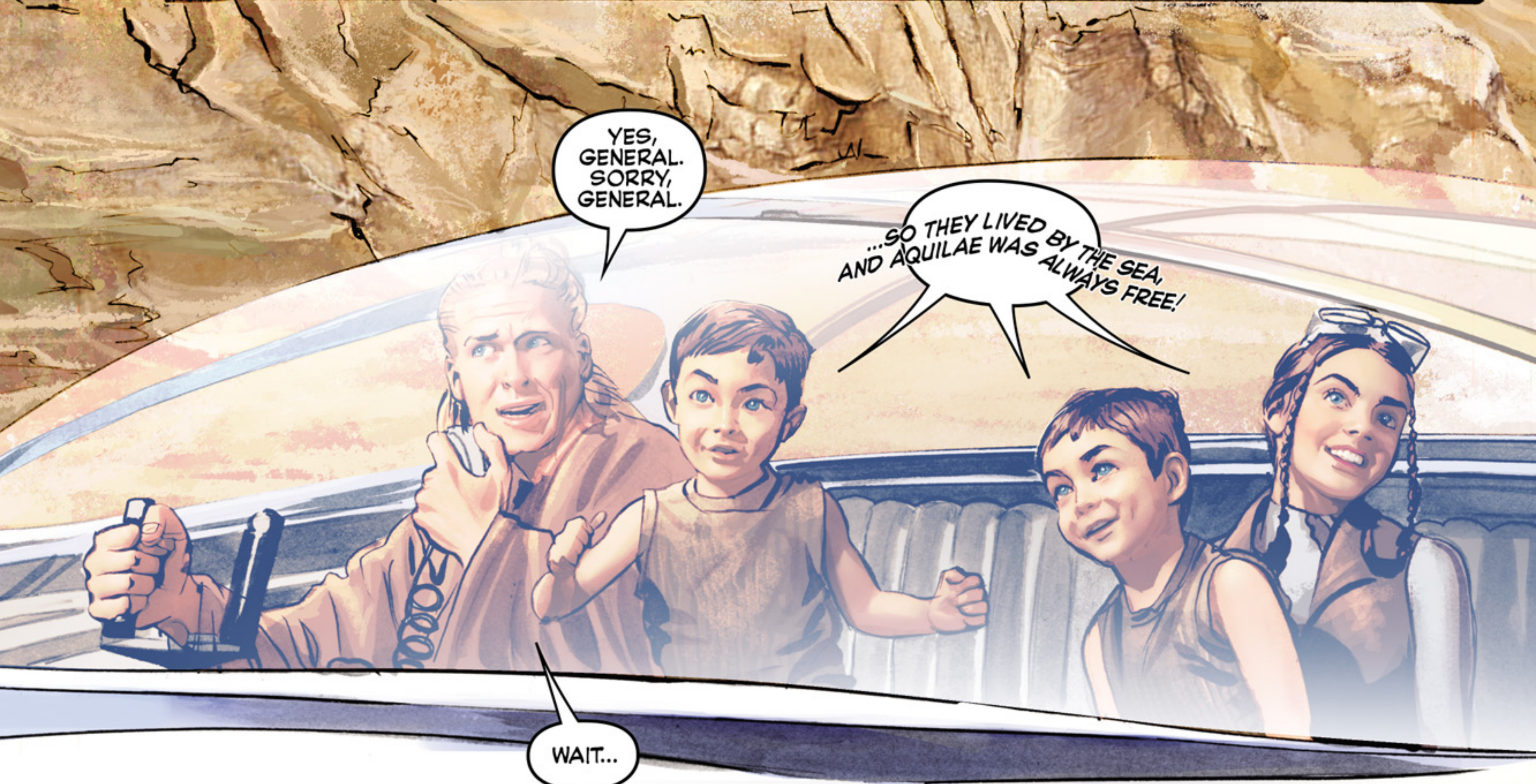
...BUT THE CAPTAIN AND HIS WIFE WERE VERY, VERY NICE...



KEEP A CLOSE WATCH, ANNIKIN. WE SHOULD BE SAFELY INSIDE GORDON WITHIN THE DAY.

Z-2 DOESN'T SEEM TO HELP AT ALL.

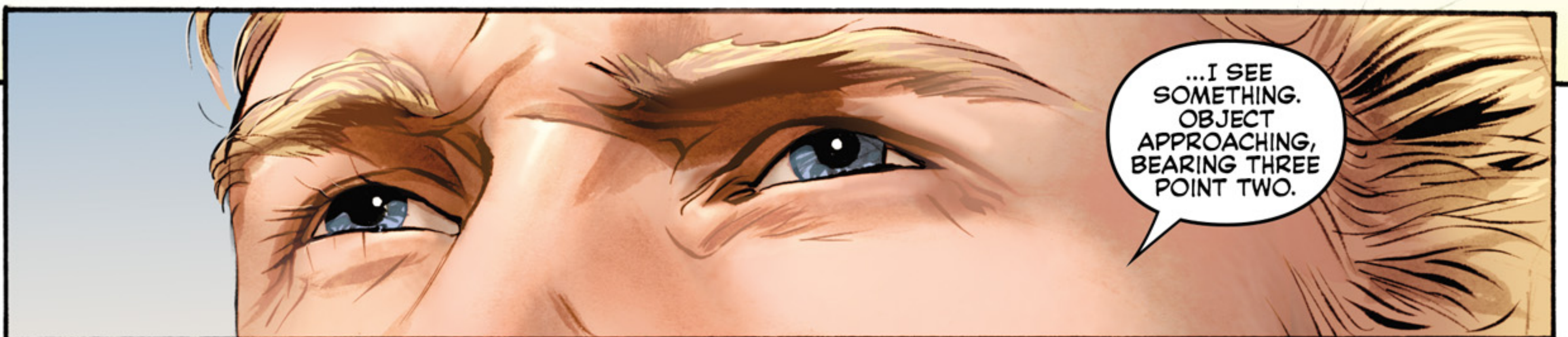
IT'S ALL THIS FILTH AND DUST. THIS ENVIRONMENT IS MURDEROUS.



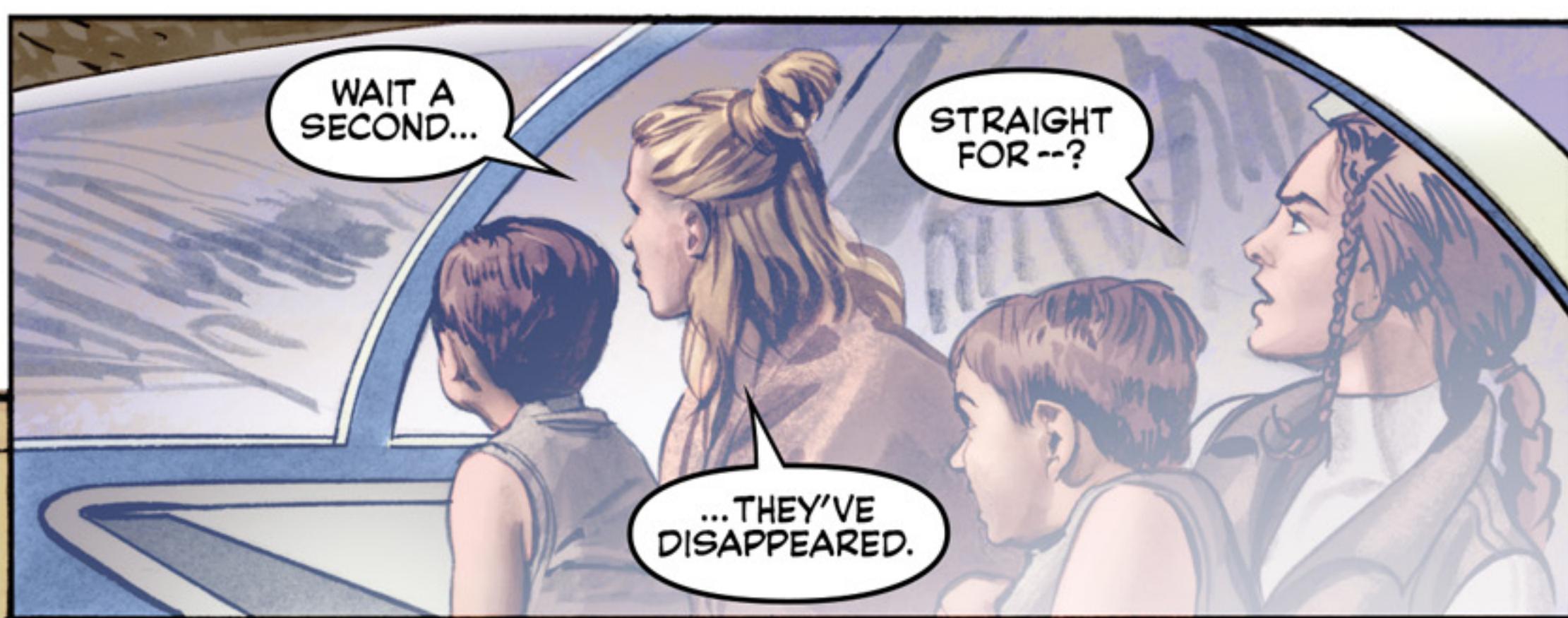
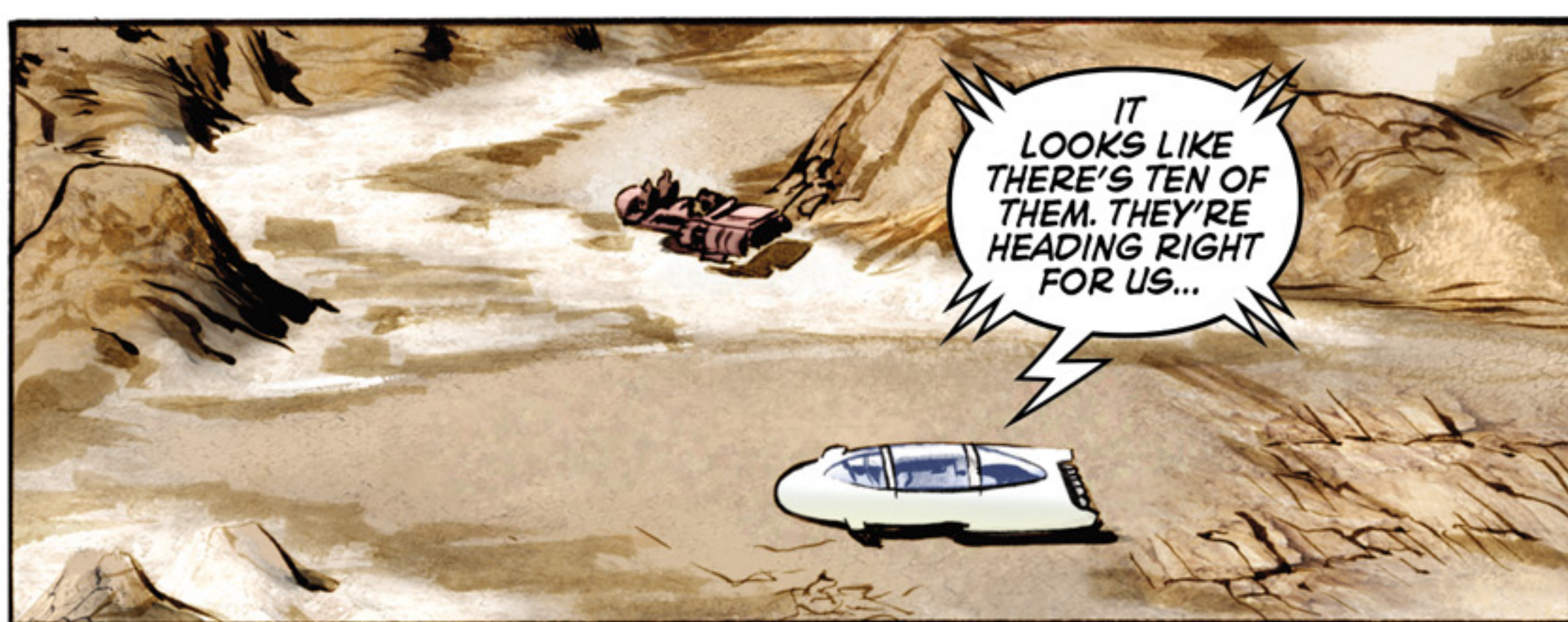
YES, GENERAL. SORRY, GENERAL.

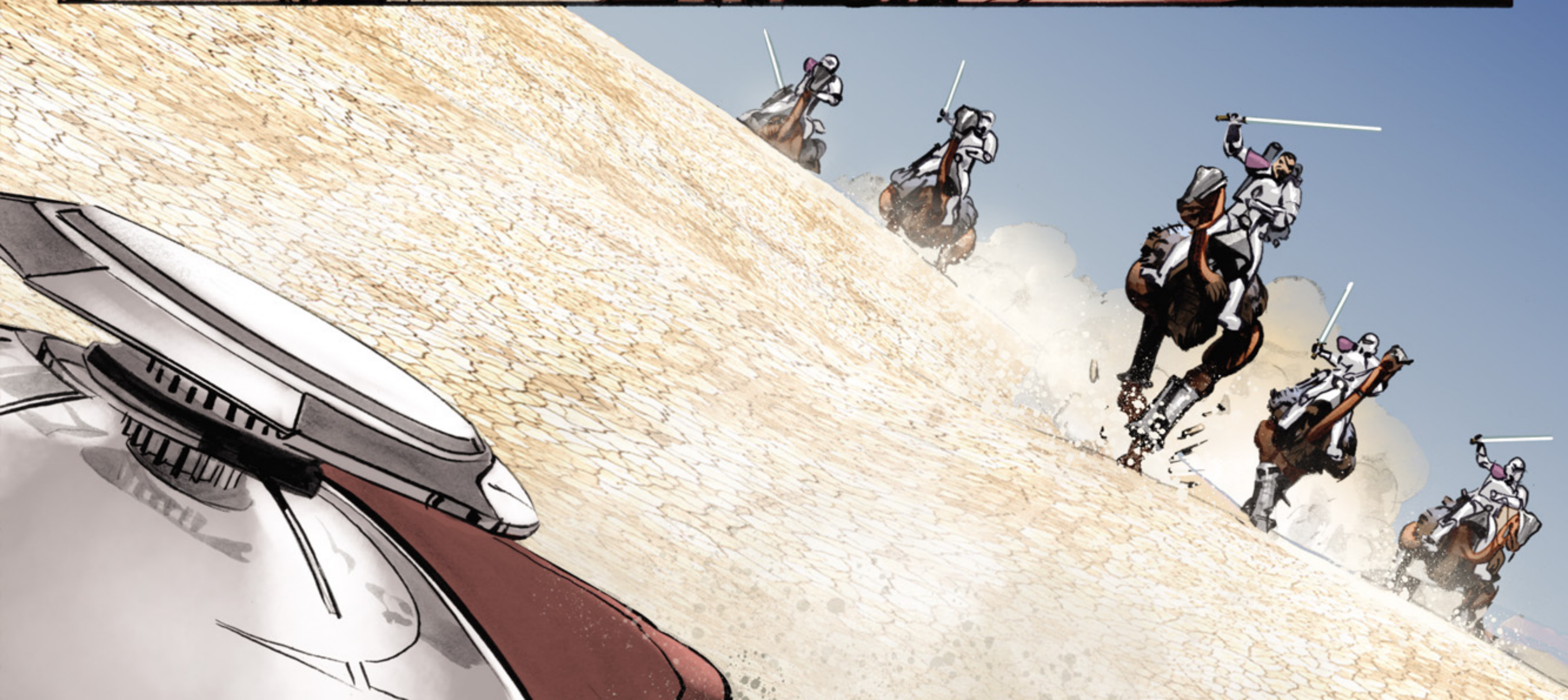
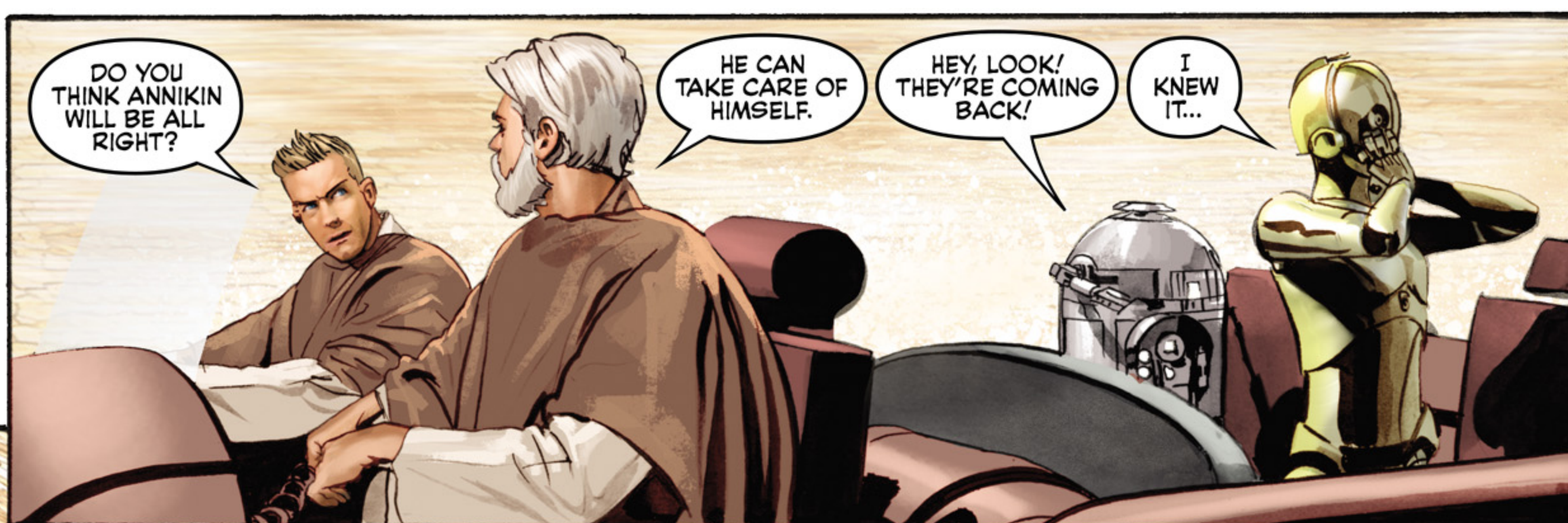
...SO THEY LIVED BY THE SEA, AND AQUILAE WAS ALWAYS FREE!

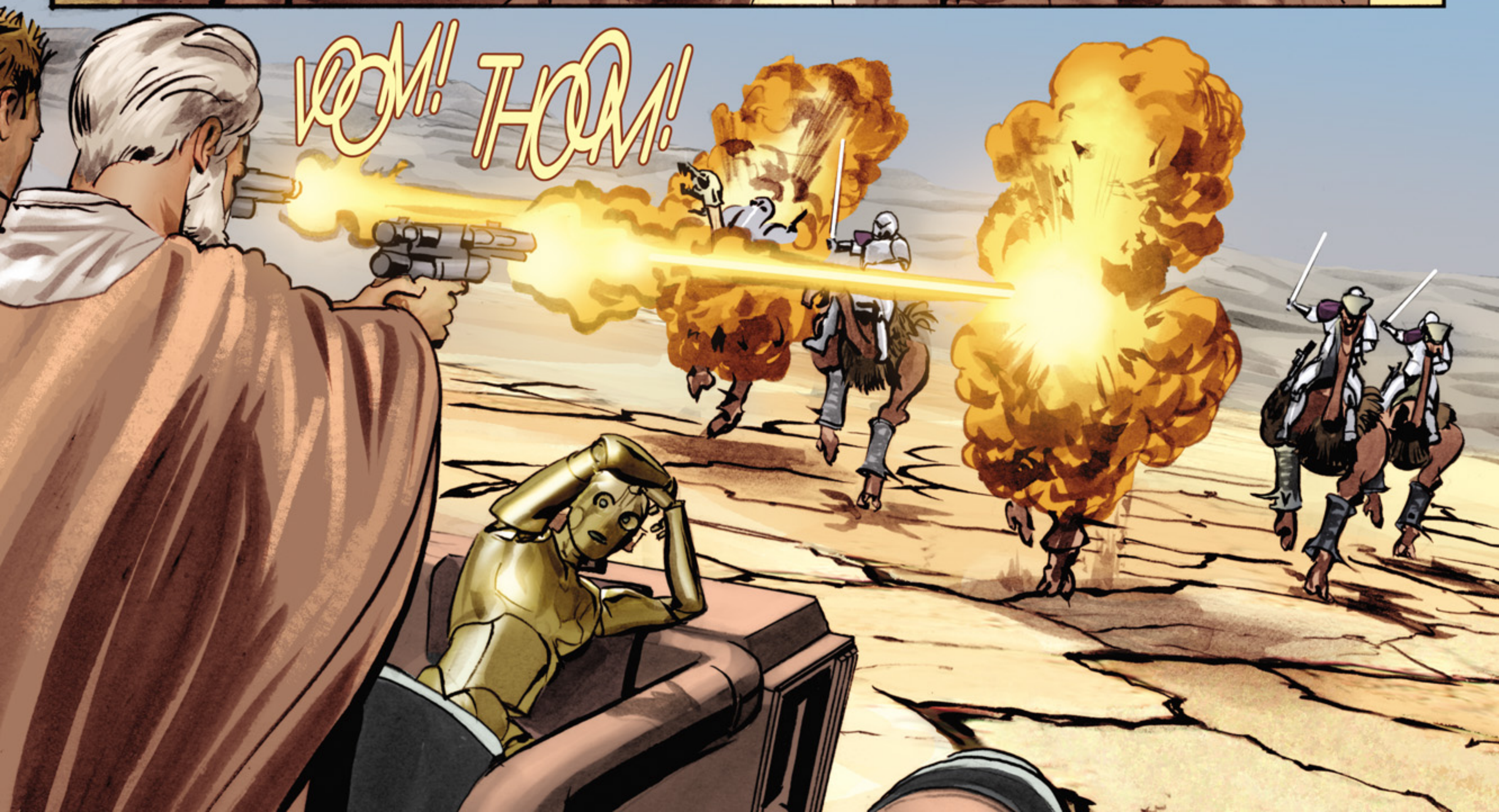
WAIT...

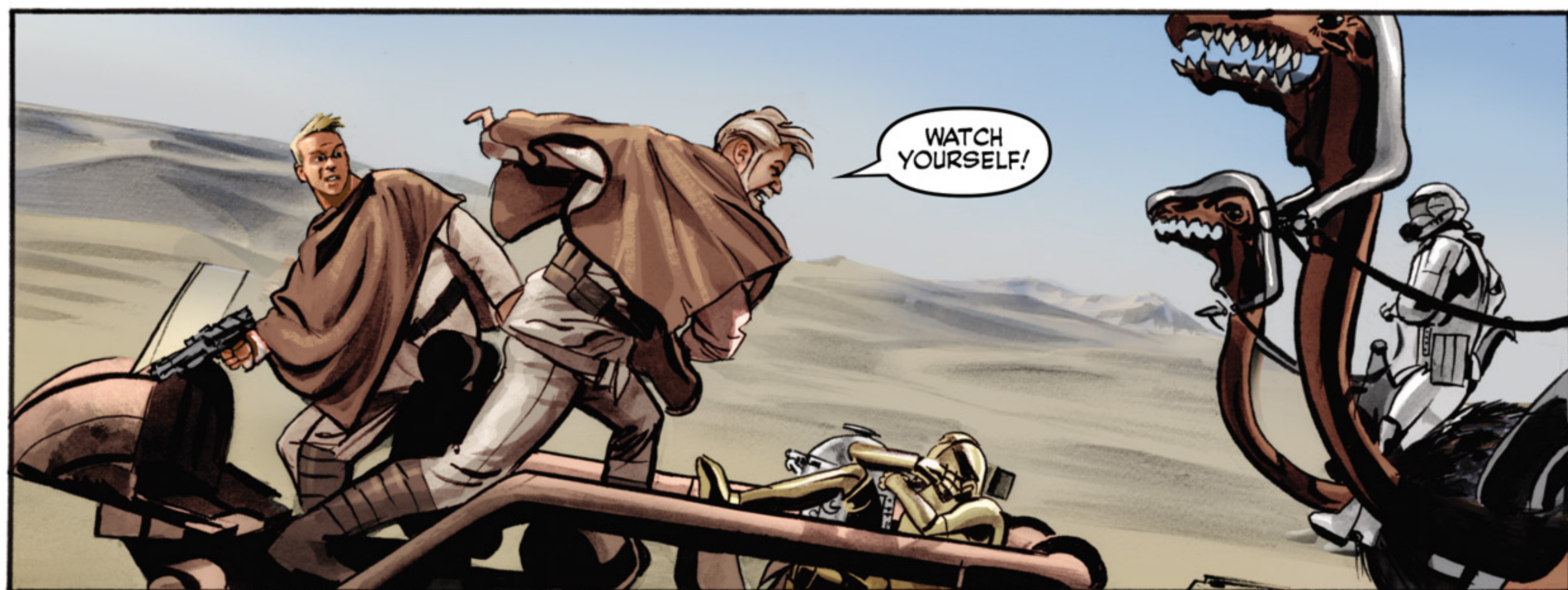


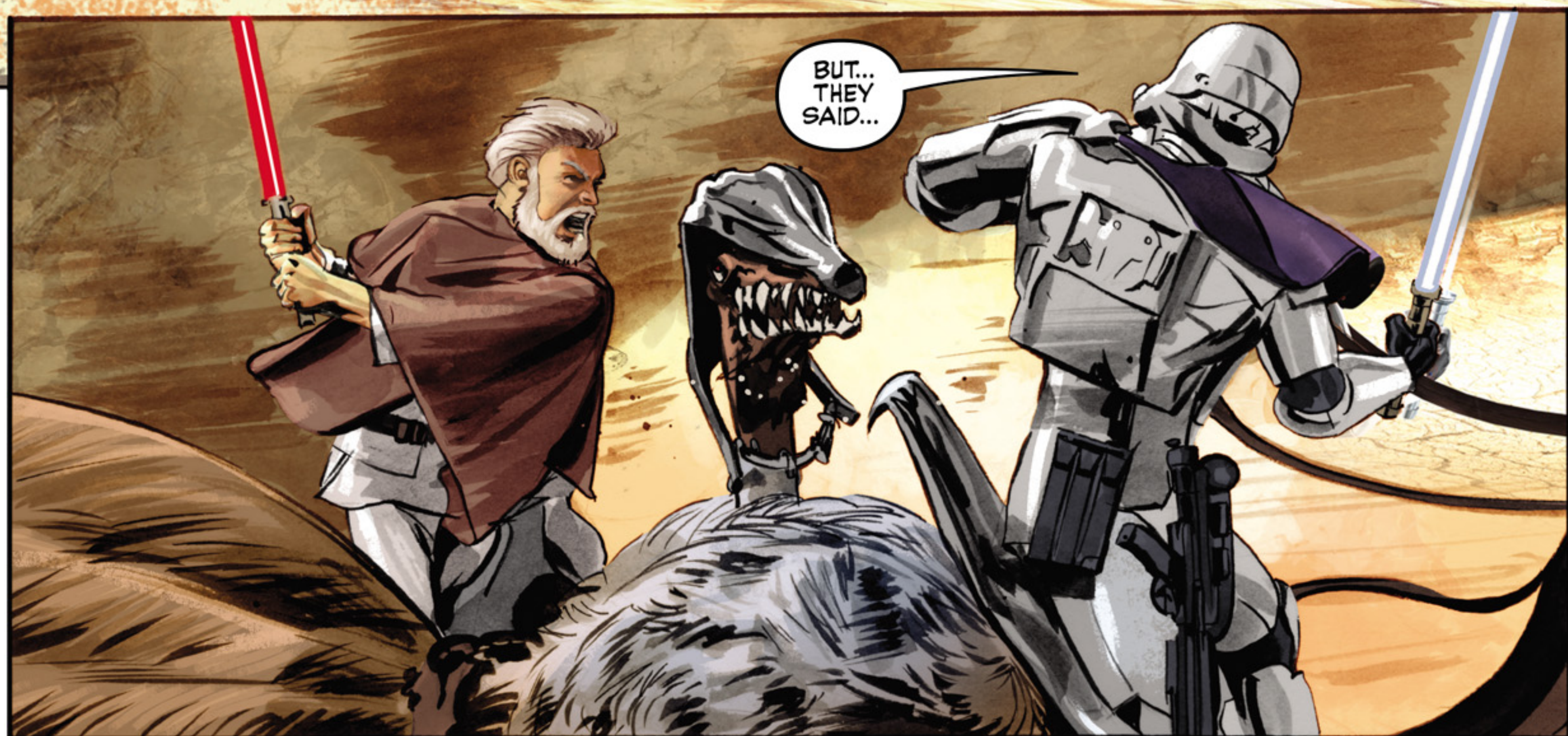
...I SEE SOMETHING. OBJECT APPROACHING, BEARING THREE POINT TWO.

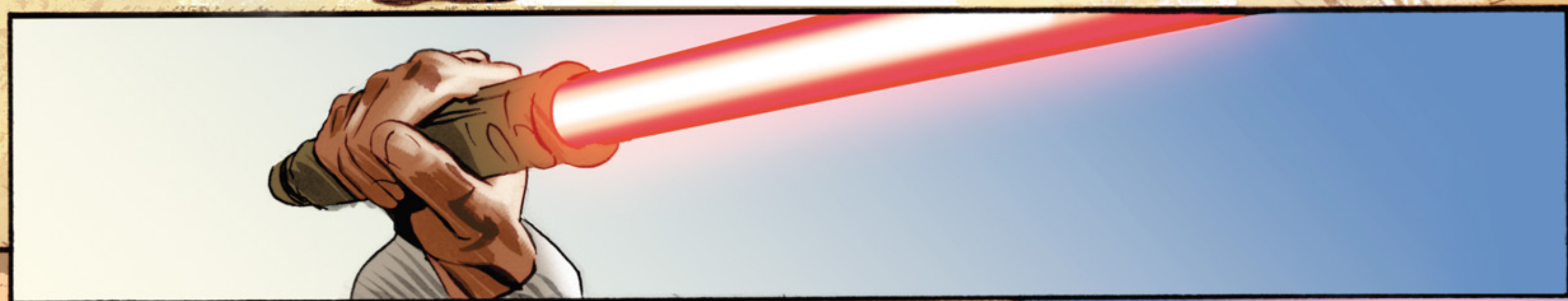


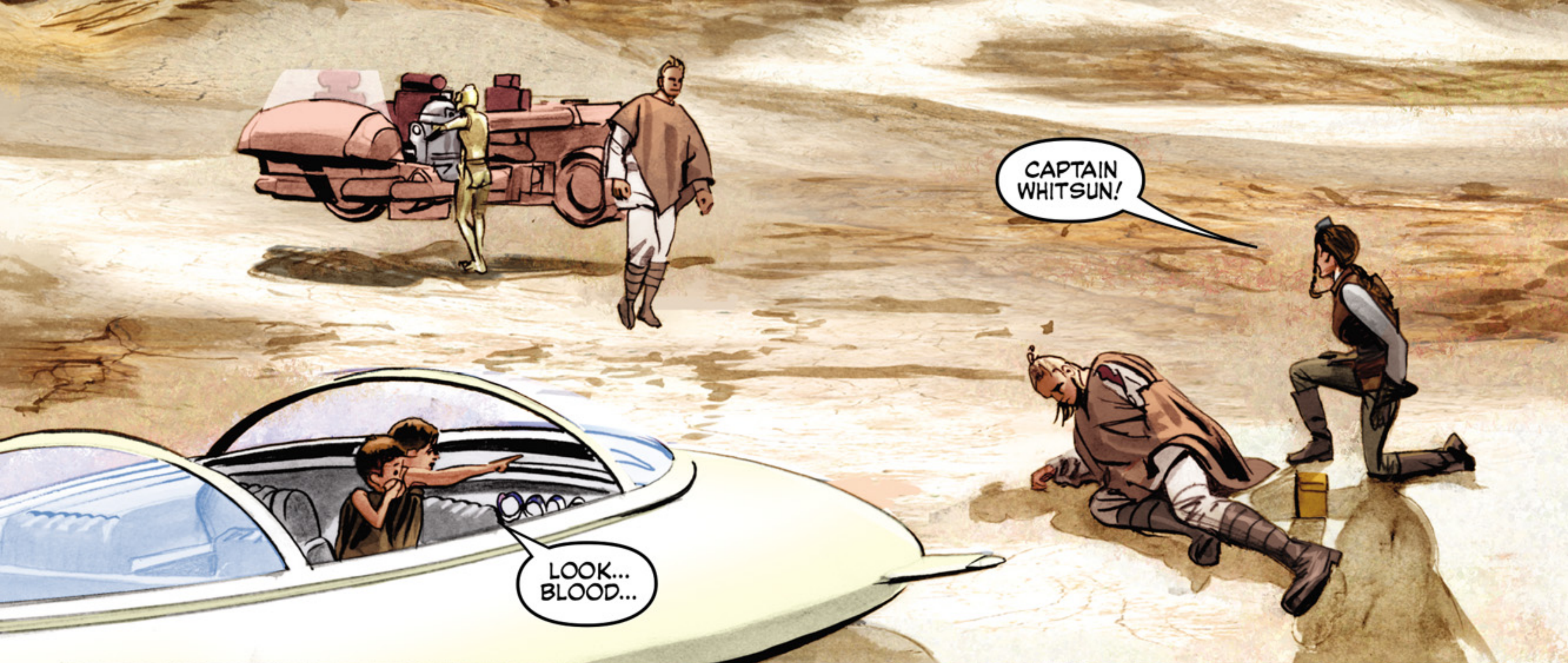






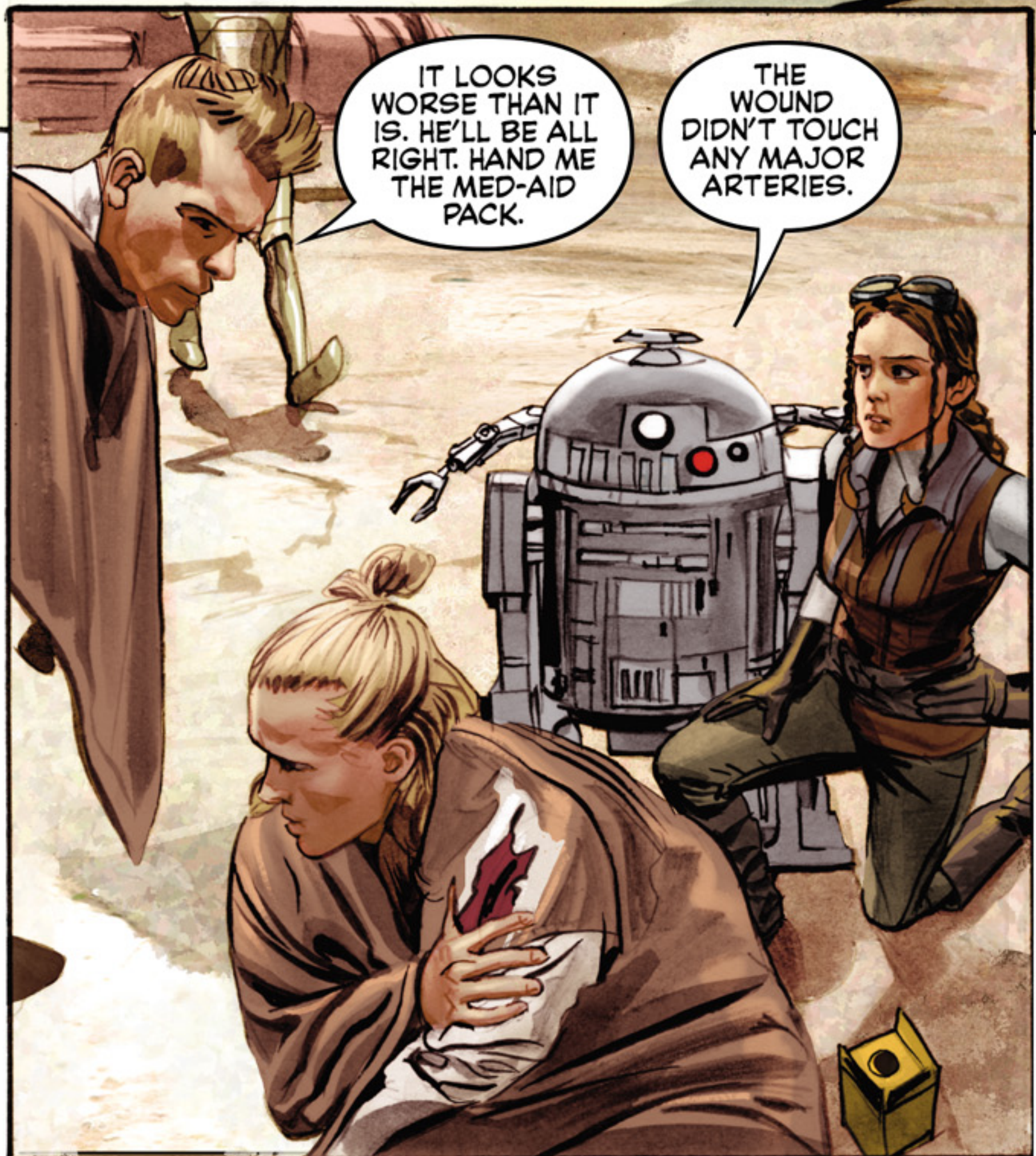






CAPTAIN WHITSUN!

LOOK...
BLOOD...



IT LOOKS
WORSE THAN IT
IS. HE'LL BE ALL
RIGHT. HAND ME
THE MED-AID
PACK.

THE
WOUND
DIDN'T TOUCH
ANY MAJOR
ARTERIES.

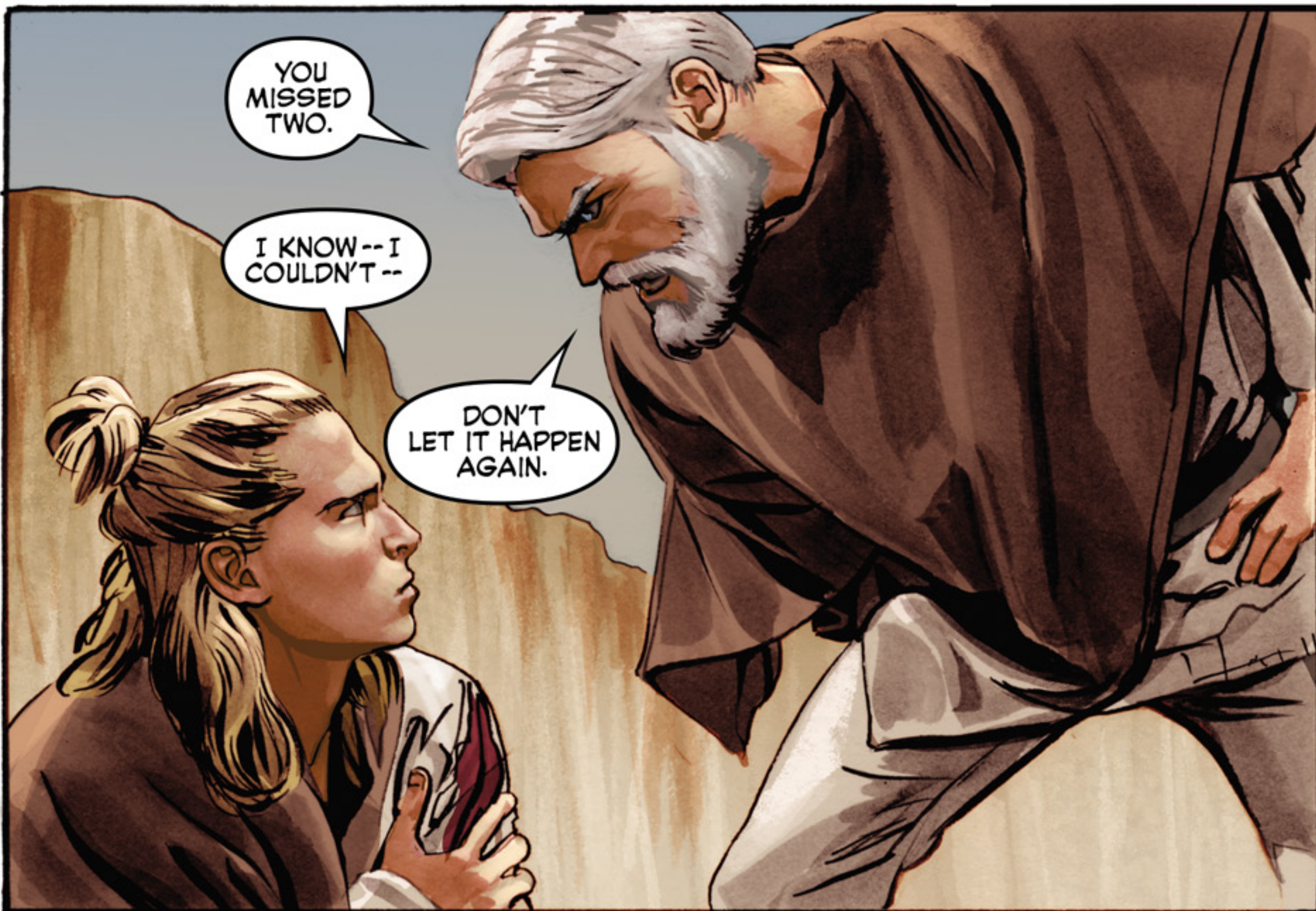


IF
HE WAS
CLUMSY
ENOUGH
TO GET
HURT --



-- MAYBE WE
OUGHT TO LET
HIM BLEED TO
DEATH.

GEE,
THANKS!



YOU
MISSED
TWO.

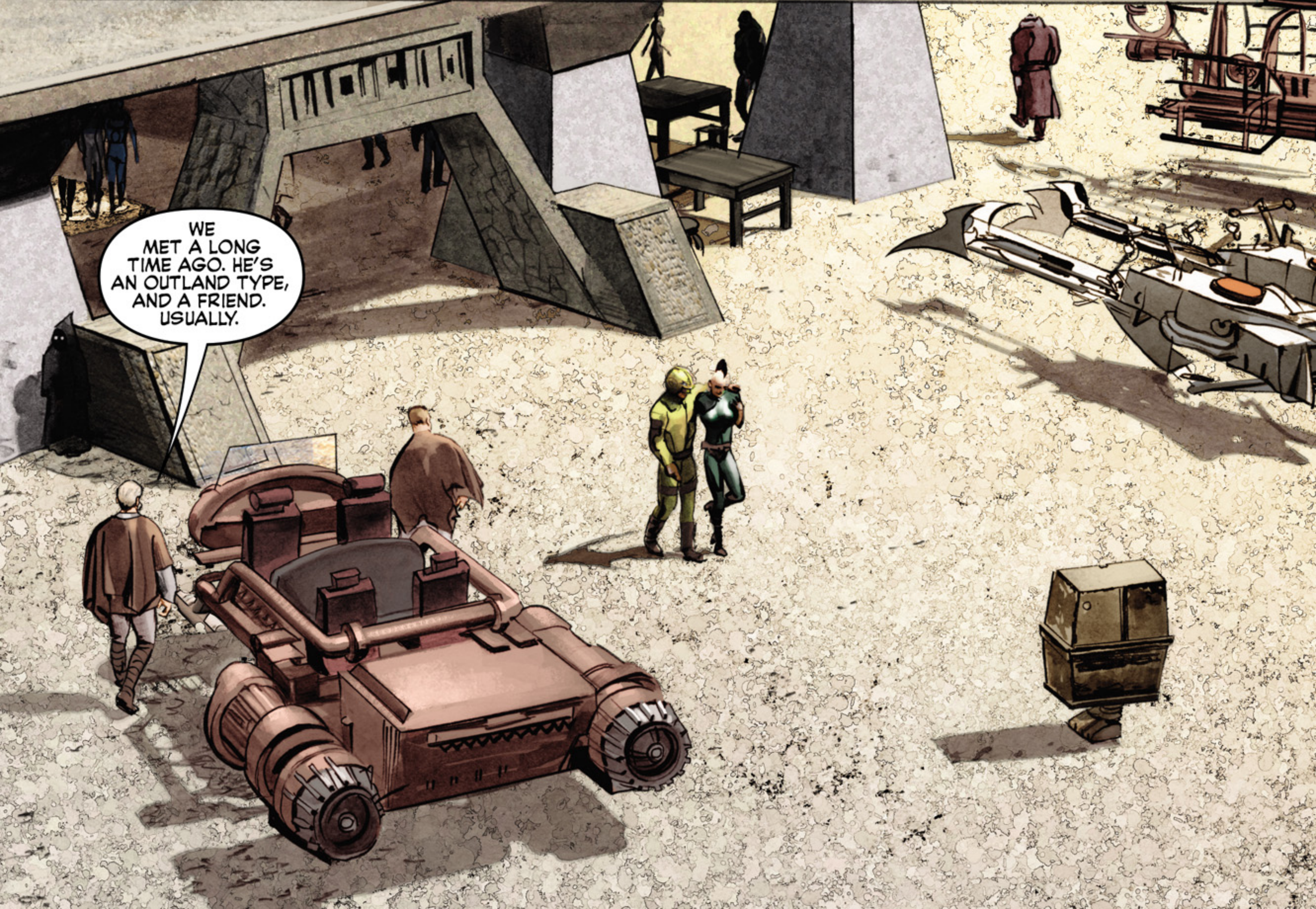
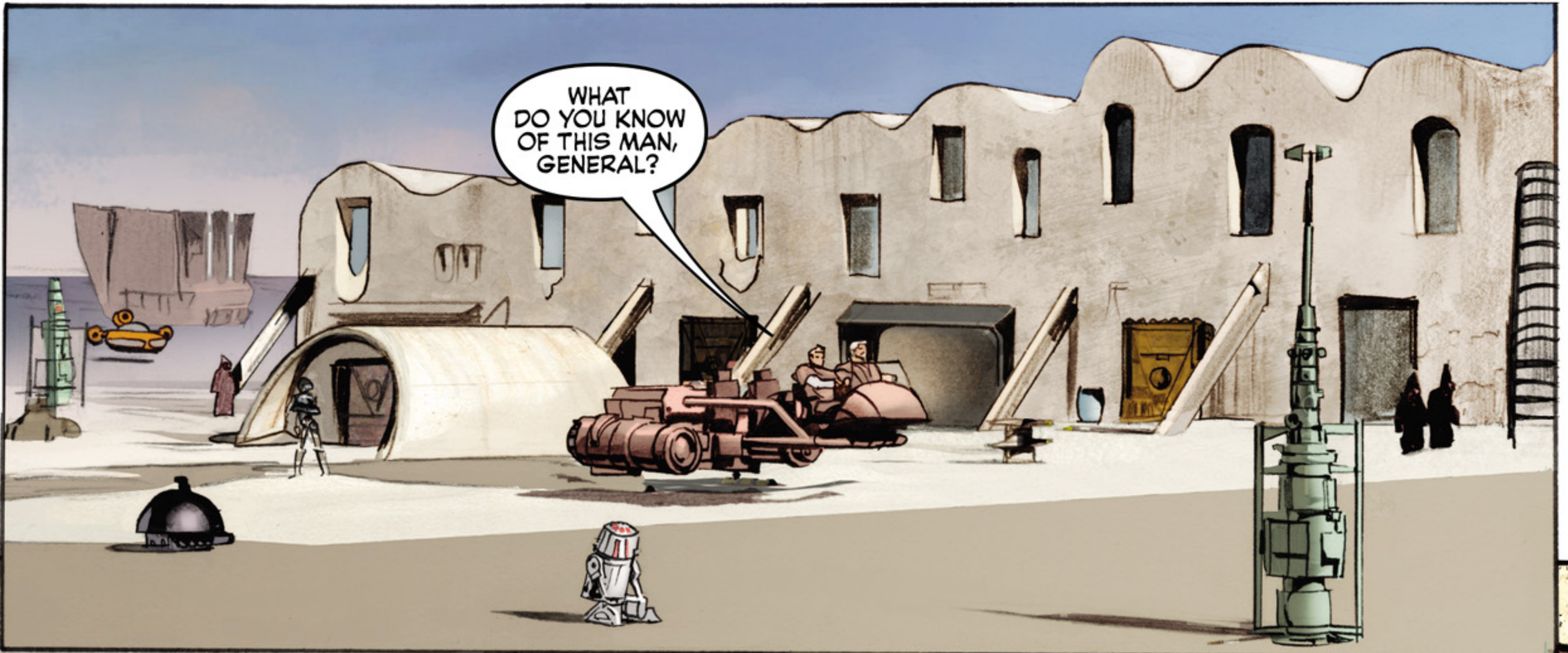
I KNOW -- I
COULDN'T --

DON'T
LET IT HAPPEN
AGAIN.

WE'D
BETTER MOVE
OUT. THEY MIGHT
HAVE REPORTED
IN.









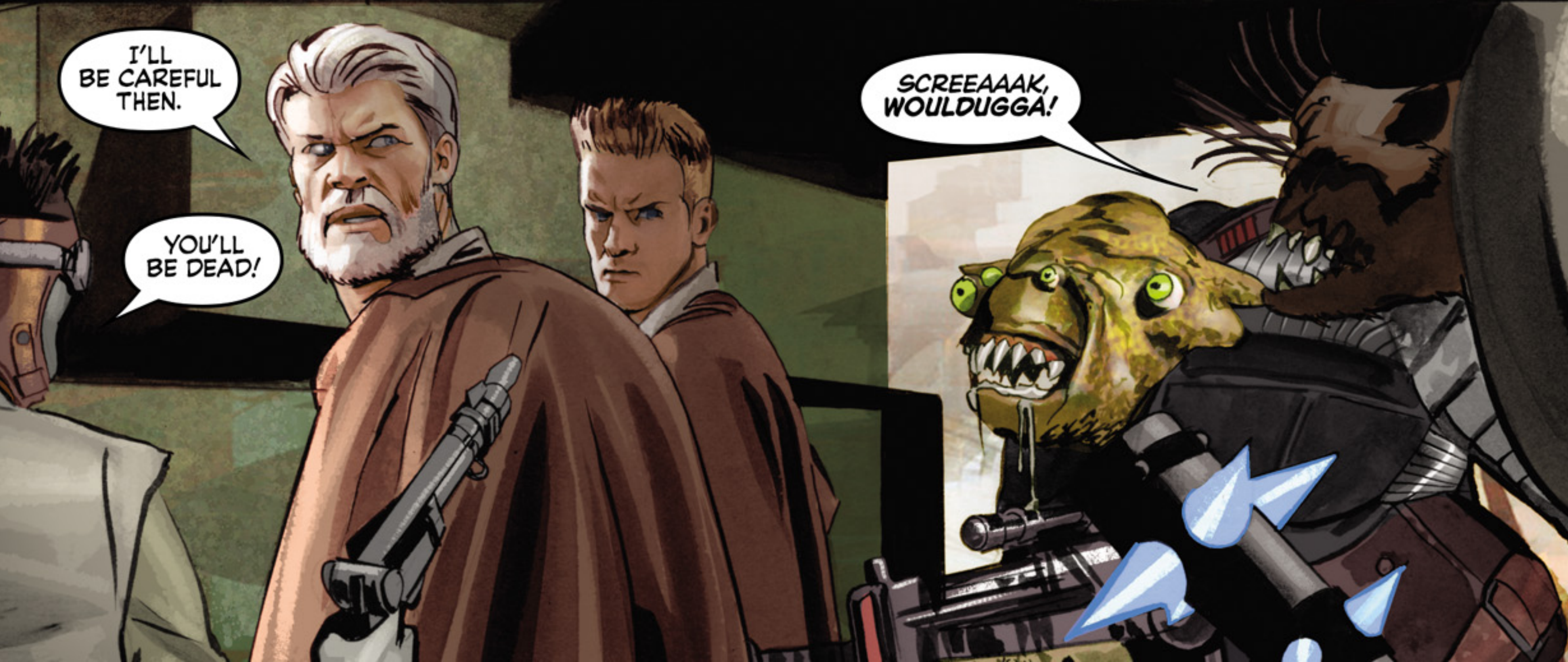
TAKE
CARE
HERE...

...IF THERE'S
ANY TROUBLE,
GET BACK TO
THE OTHERS.



SIE
BATHA NE
BEECHEE?

ROOOARRGH
UR ROO.





YOU INSIST ON A FIGHT THEN. IT WILL HURT A LITTLE.

JUST TRY AND KILL US. WE AREN'T COWARDS.



THEN IT CAN'T BE HELPED.

AARRGH!



WHA--?!

ERK...



WOULDUGG...?

WHITSUN, GIVE THE BARTENDER SOMETHING TO KEEP IT QUIET.

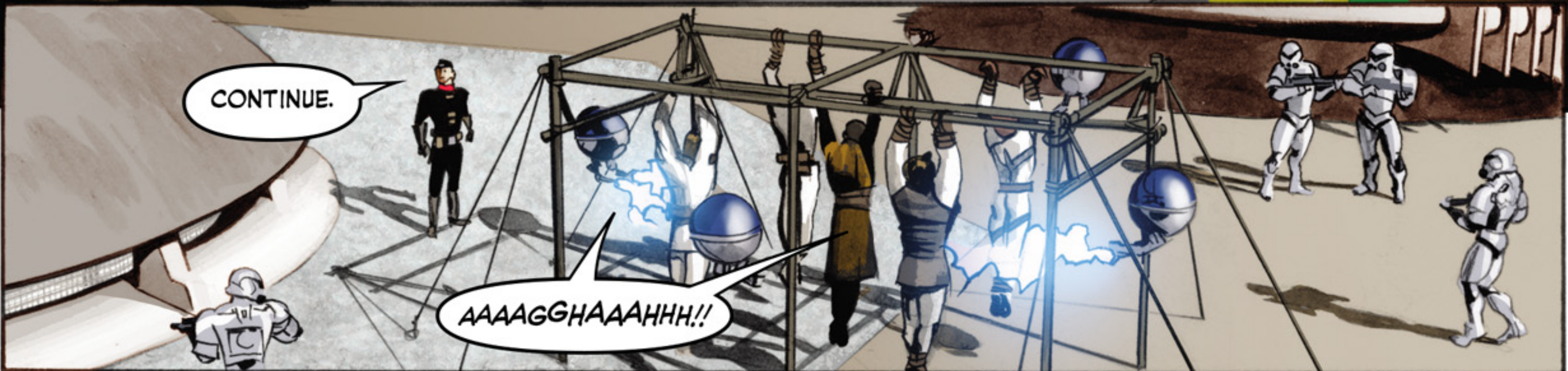
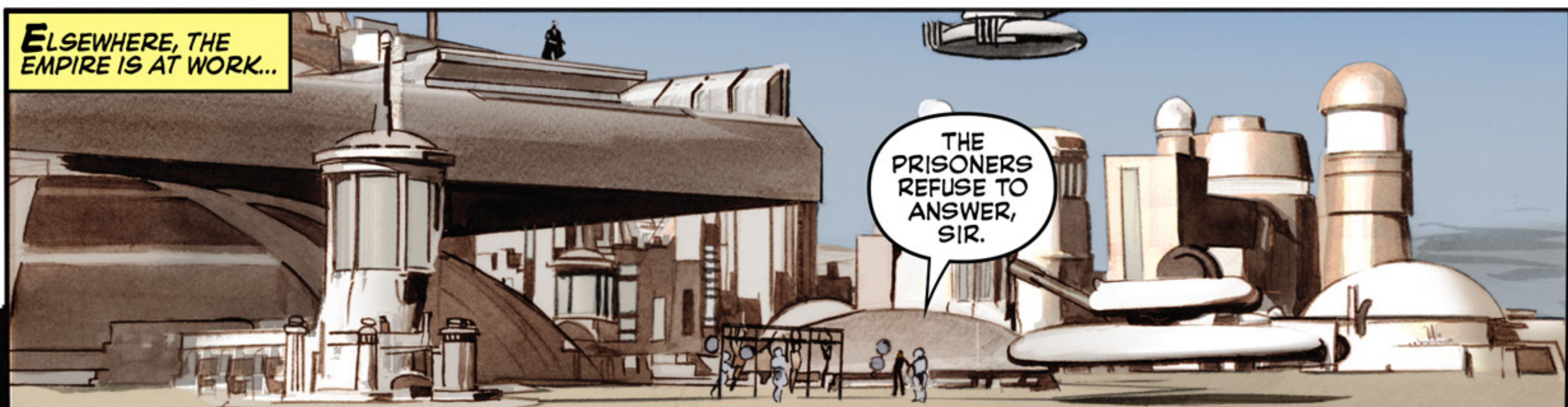




LATER...

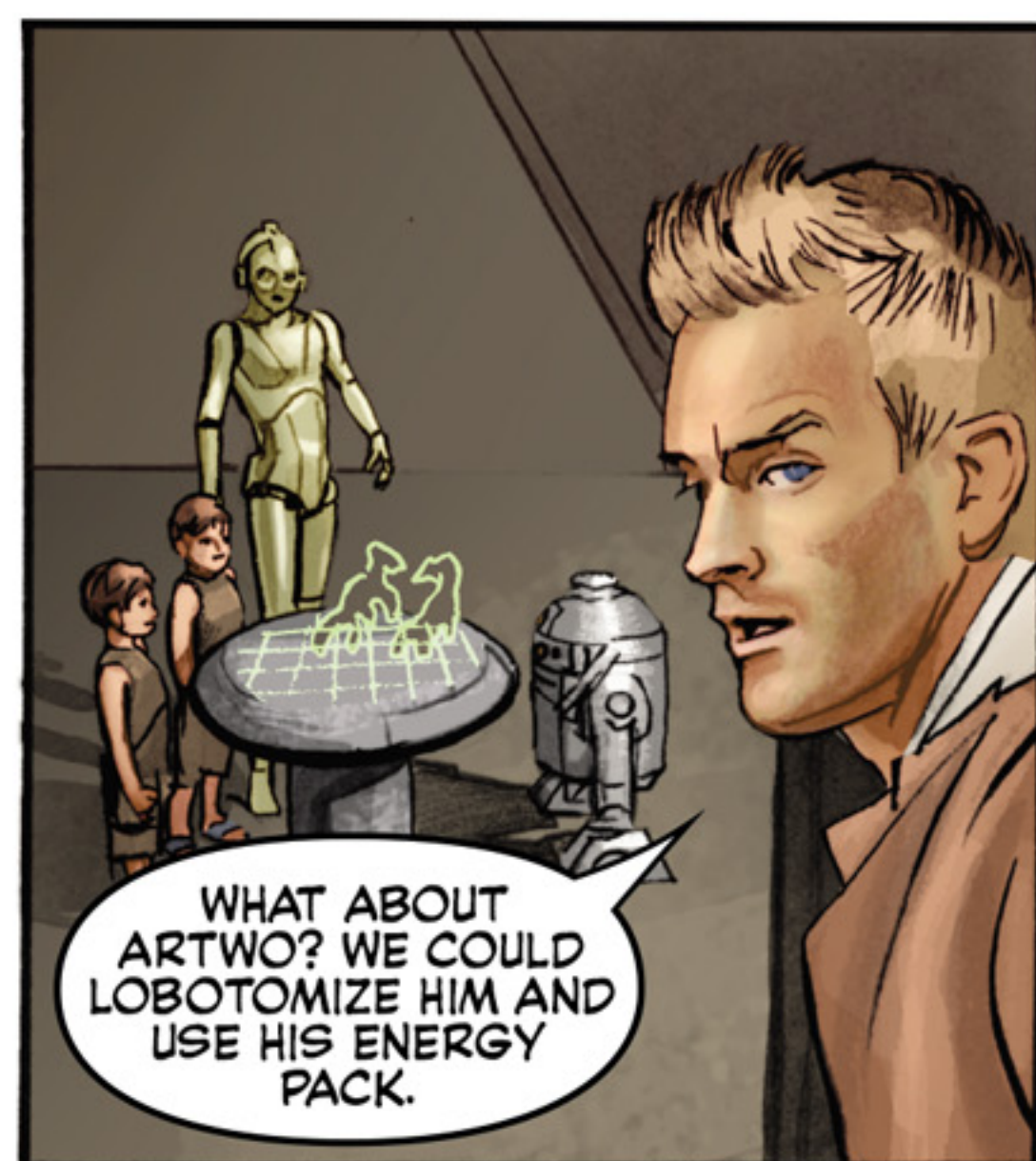


ELSEWHERE, THE EMPIRE IS AT WORK...











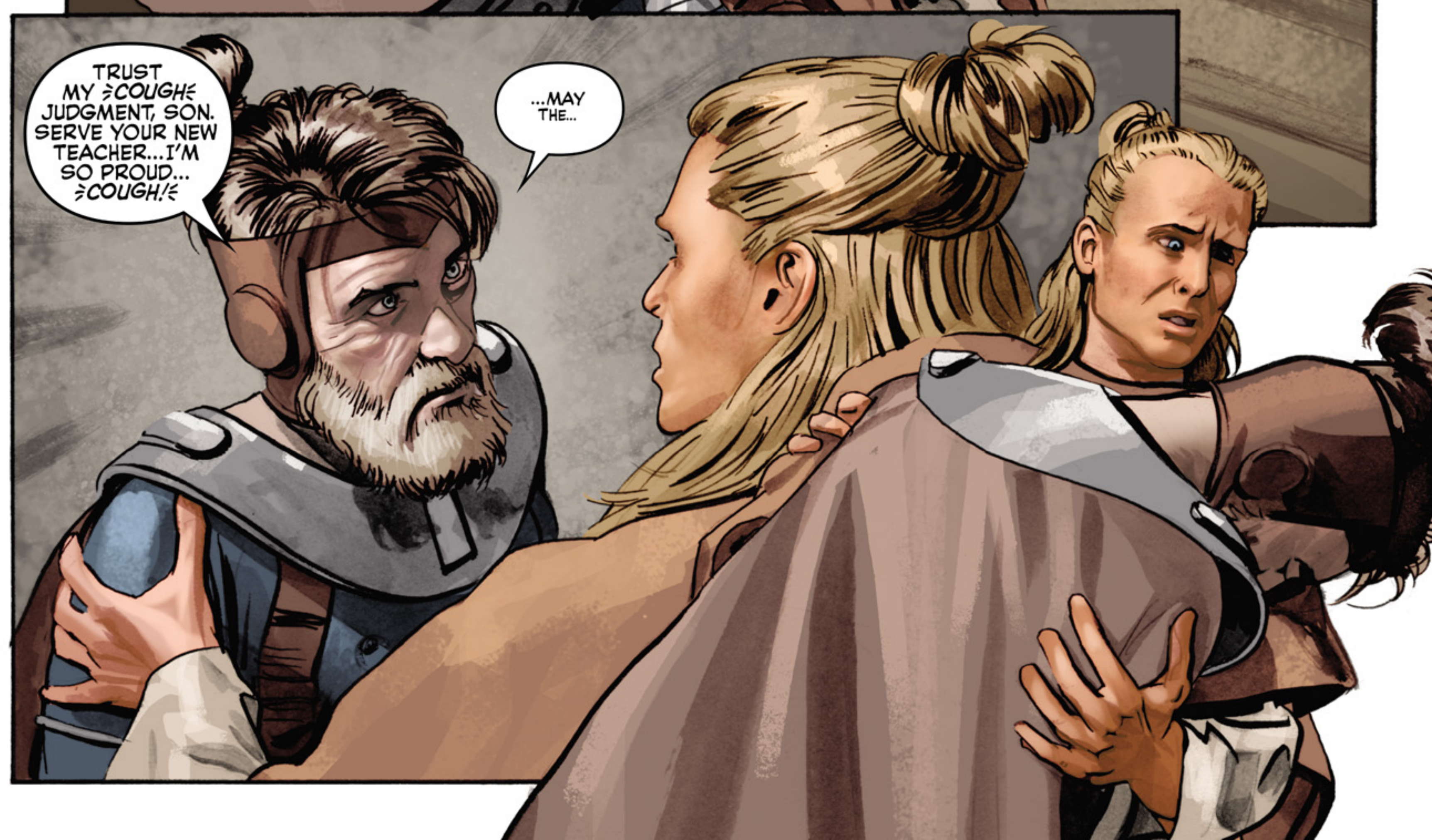
THIS MACHINE POWER ISN'T DOING ME ANY GOOD.

HERE! TAKE IT.

DAD, YOU'LL DIE...

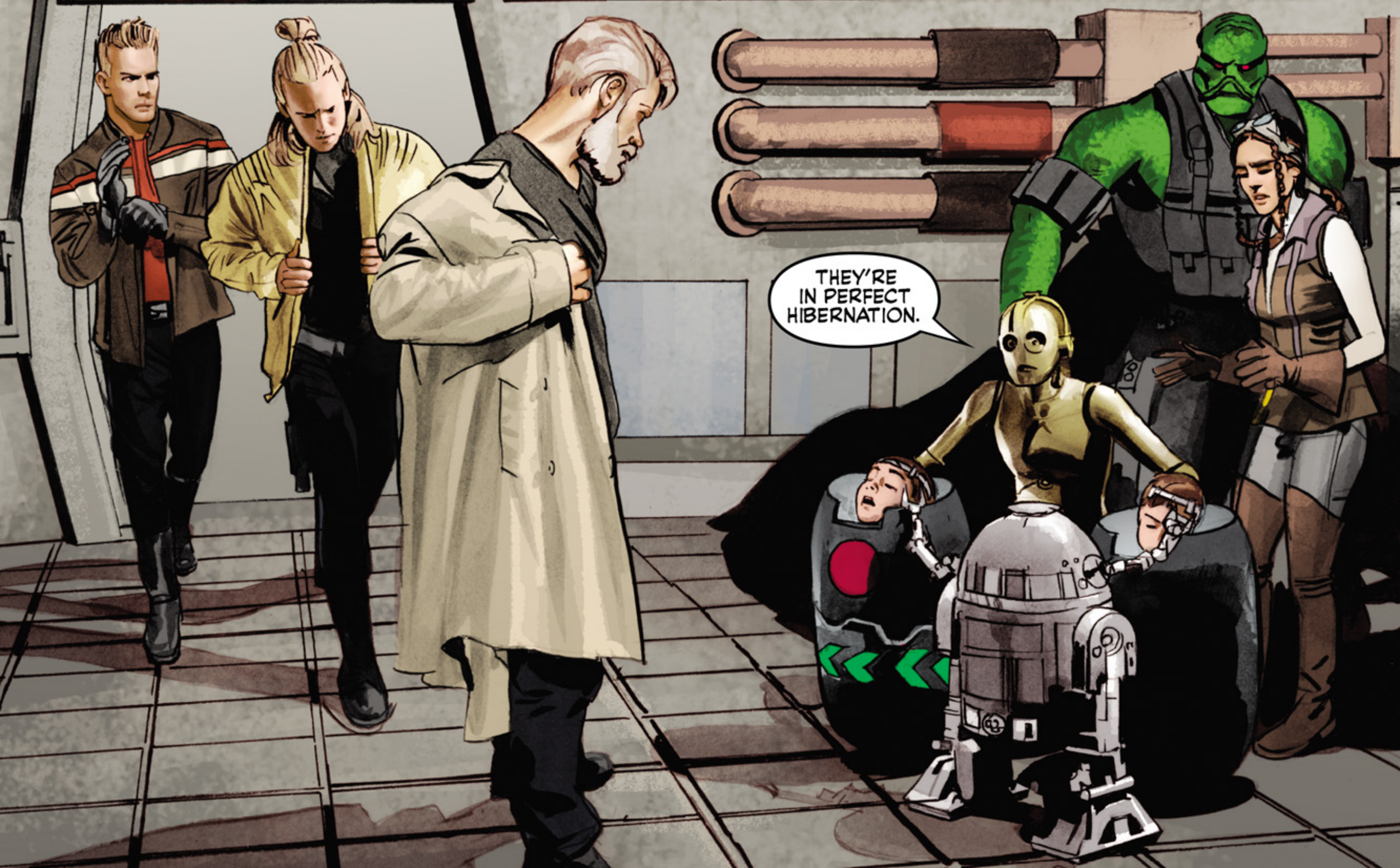
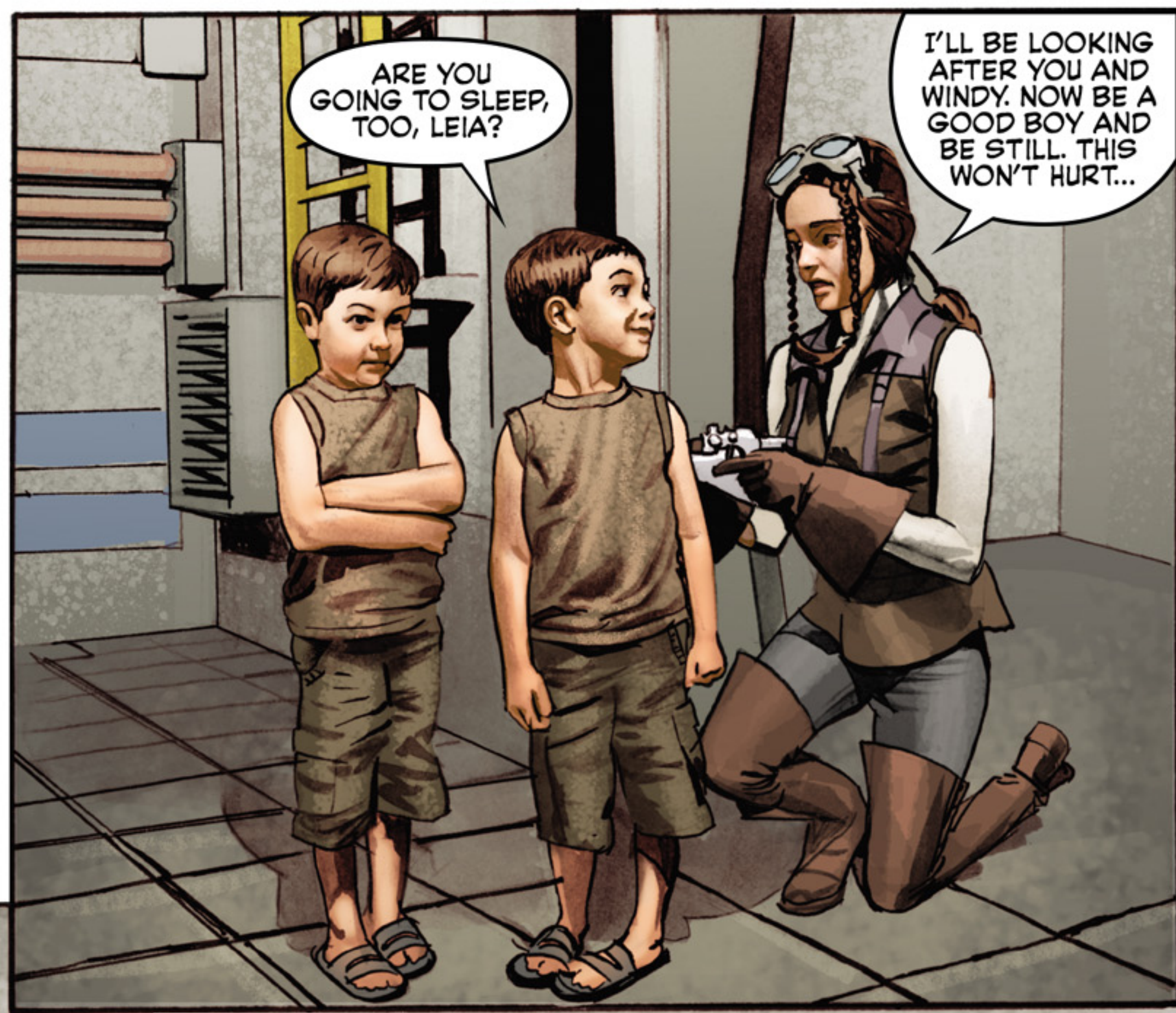
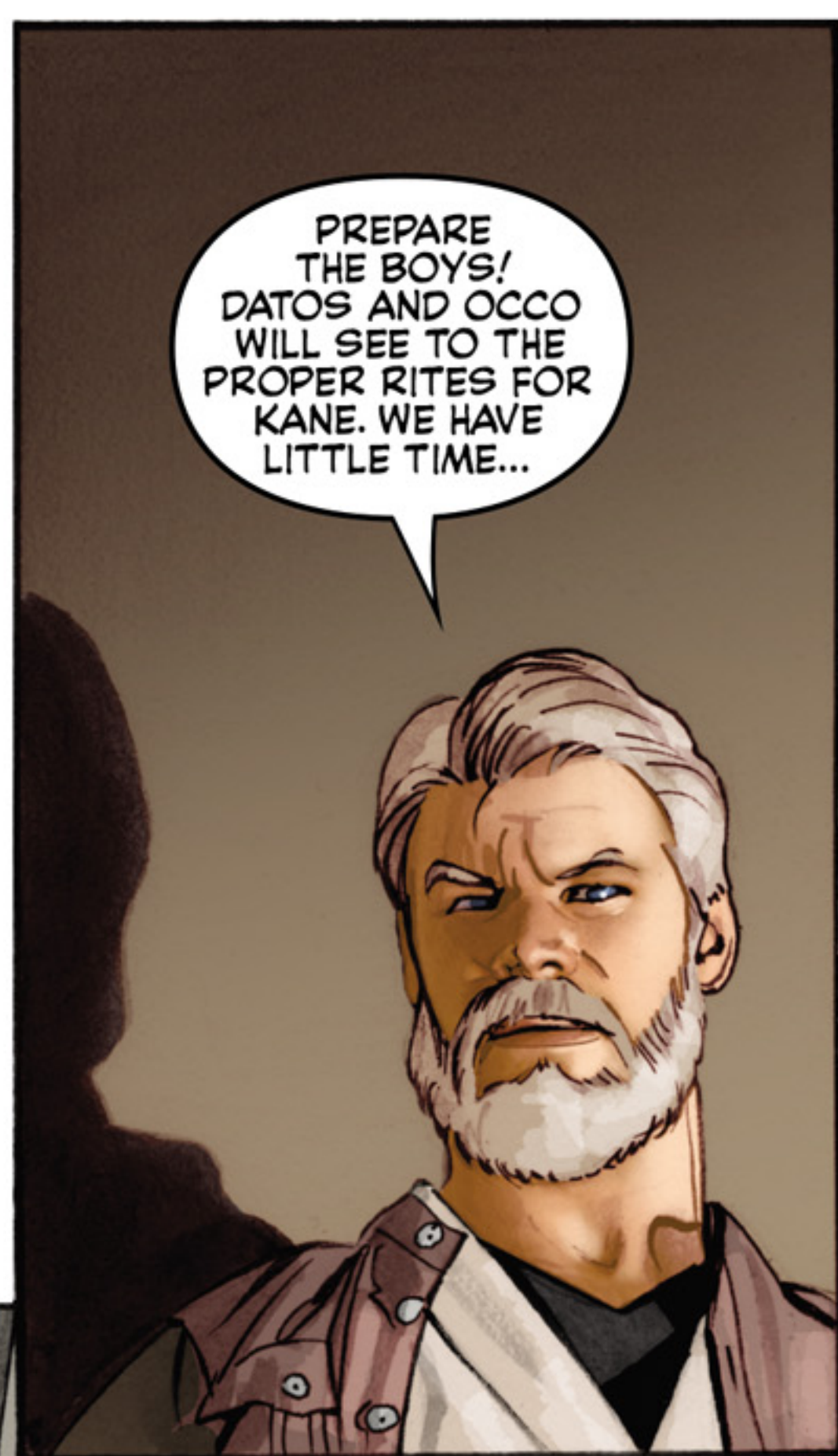
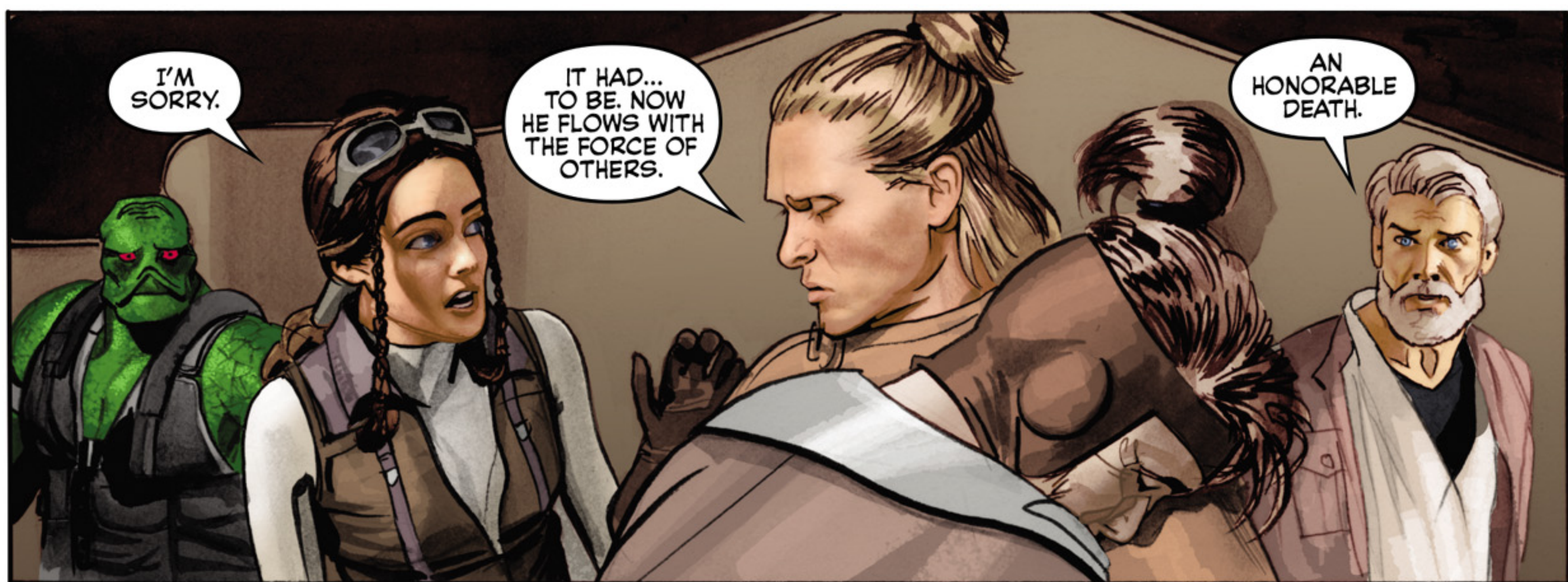


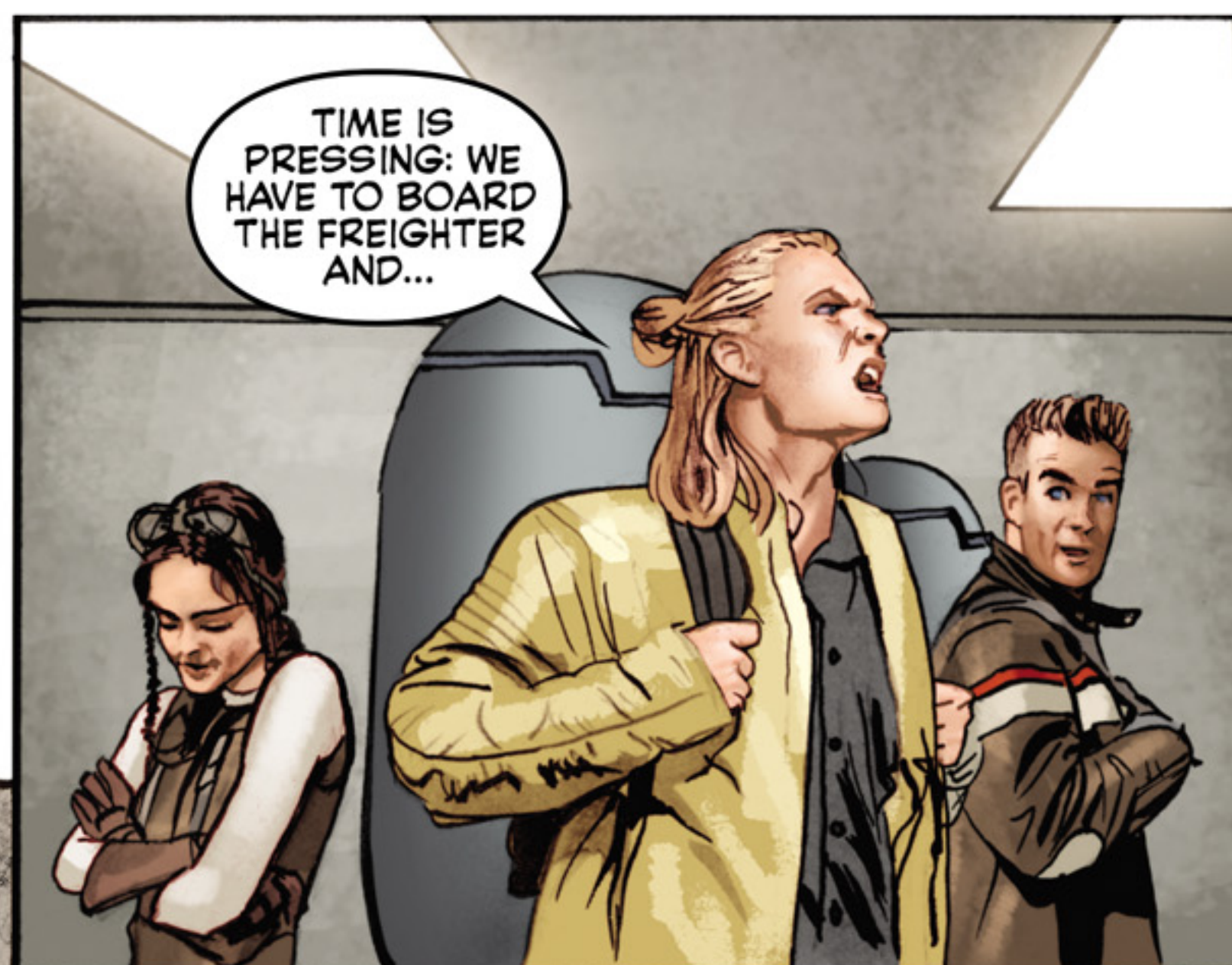
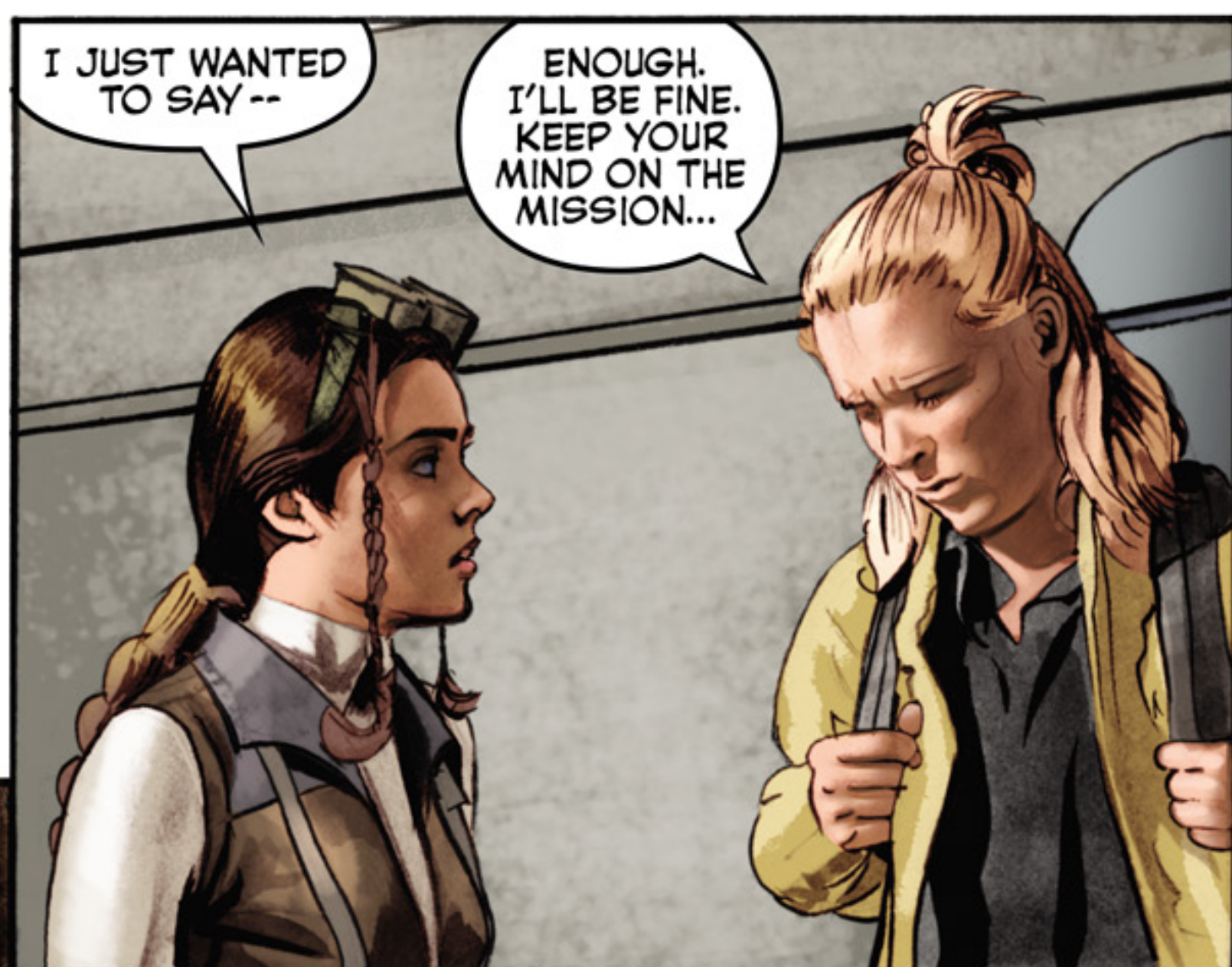
DAD!



TRUST MY ~~COUGH~~ JUDGMENT, SON. SERVE YOUR NEW TEACHER...I'M SO PROUD... ~~COUGH~~

...MAY THE...





THE STAR WARS

The Star Wars

c/o Dark Horse Comics
10956 SE Main Street
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starwars@darkhorse.com
Boards.DarkHorse.com

The mail and messages we've received regarding The Star Wars indicate that we've managed to catch our readers by surprise—especially those who picked up the first issue with less than stellar expectations. But I'll let them tell the story . . .

I usually wait until a miniseries is finished before I read it. But for *The Star Wars*, I made an exception. This is a long series, and I am too eager to let it wait on my desk for it to be completed before I dive into this exciting journey of familiar names in not-so-familiar settings. So far, the first issue was a lot of fun. For a “rough draft,” it flowed really well, with very strong dialogue.

But I must admit, the biggest gem is Mike Mayhew's artwork. It really is fantastic. I can't wait to see what more is in store for us.

Nick Zaromatidis

You can't wait, Nick? Sorry, but I insist upon it. Trust me, though—there's great stuff coming up!

Good grief! Annikin's straight up knocked Leia out! R2-D2 is not only speaking English, but he's also the one hesitating to enter the life-pod because he's worried about rules and regulations?! What the heck am I reading?!

And why do I have to wait thirty whole days for the next issue?

Mike Harlow

Time is a pain sometimes, isn't it, Mike? But at least it prevents everything from happening at once!

The wonderful detail in the attack on the Deathstar (?) was brilliant. The sharp orders and interplay between the pilots showed a real understanding of the fraught nature of their task. The panels are laid out perfectly, giving a great sense of energy in the attack scene—quite brilliant. Also, losing some of the Devil Squadron in the mission added to the feel.

My initial thoughts on this title were that perhaps this will be a flimsy cash-in, something turned out quickly to keep the fans happy up until VII . . . a “they'll buy anything” type of thing. I'm happy to be proven wrong, and two issues in, I'm extremely impressed and hooked.

Nigel J. Aiken

We at Dark Horse never settle for half measures, Nigel. Very happy to have surprised you!

I just read *The Star Wars* #2! J. W. Rinzler's writing is great! Mike Mayhew's artwork is perfect! I really like how R2 talks in this version! It is really cool to see the original version of *Star Wars*! I look forward to seeing Han Solo!

Troy Vevasis

Well, now that you've seen him, what do you think?

First off, let me tell you guys, it was not easy getting copies of the first issue, as it quickly sold out in my local comic shop, and I had to have my copy reserved for the next issue—which also sold out!

When I finally got to open up my copy, the geek and the *aspiring* writer in me screamed in unison with joy! On the one hand, my inner geek was in awe at seeing the story of *Star Wars* unfold in its original form as close to Lucas's initial idea as you could get. On the other, my wannabe-writer side was scanning all the details, enjoying every minute of seeing the genesis of the myth and the story; I can only hope to one day create something even remotely close to that power and sense of grandeur. But hey, to sum it all up, I think my initial reaction to issue #1 was that of seeing an Arthurian fantasy/fairy tale—a really well-told one—showcasing some of the greatest art I've seen in the franchise for a while. I had a similar reaction to issue #2, but I certainly paid more attention to the little details this time, like the fact that C-3PO was more loyal in looks to the robot in *Metropolis*, and the Devil Squadron had crosses for insignias, very akin to the Crusaders. Mike Mayhew did a sick job with the art, and J. W. Rinzler was equally applause worthy for his adaptation of this legendary script.

Thank you guys for confounding my expectations, as well as helping bridge the gap between my childhood and my adolescence. You have certainly earned the lifelong gratitude of this humble fan.

Alexander Sison
The Philippines

The “cross symbols” were part of George Lucas's original draft, Alexander. We're just trying to be loyal to the source material!

Thank you for publishing *The Star Wars*. As a filmmaker who was very influenced in my early teens by the original movie in 1977, this is a fascinating look at George Lucas's screenwriting process. It's amazing to see what could have been an interesting film, but most likely a far less popular one, come to life in comic-book form. These books (issues #1 and #2 so far) are an invaluable contribution to the *Star Wars* universe, but more importantly to students of screenwriting. They should become required reading in screenwriting classes and workshops, as they show the very beginnings of the process of invention and discovery that went through several iterations and numerous drafts to become the first trilogy of *Star Wars* movies.

I look forward to reading the rest of the books and appreciate the work that has gone into them, from the writing, to the design, to the finished artwork. I don't say this lightly, as I'm only a fan of the highest quality artwork and writing when it comes to comics.

John Damien

Use the comics as a guide to screenwriting? Interesting idea, John. Please let us know if it happens!

The Star Wars #2 was fun! It was kind of weird to see R2-D2 talk. C-3PO looks a lot like the character from Fritz Lang's movie *Metropolis*, while other elements remind me of *Buck Rogers*, *Flash Gordon*, or something like that. Of course there is so much that is familiar, like the stardestroyers or the escape of the two robots, but it's a little bit different. Kind of like a parallel universe.

Thank you very much for bringing *The Star Wars* to life!

Unsigned
Germany

Of course the Buck Rogers and Flash Gordon film serials from the 1930s (as well as Alex Raymond's Flash Gordon comic strips) were a big inspiration for Mr. Lucas—as many of Ralph McQuarrie's early designs for The Star Wars will attest.

Color me impressed.

I remember a few years ago finding early drafts of *Star Wars* online, and reading this particular first draft (though I never finished it). I remember thinking to myself, "If only there were a comic-book adaptation of this so we could actually get a visual impression of what might have been." The Force must have reached out to you, because that's what you have made. My compliments. Mike Mayhew's artwork is stunning,

truly capturing the look of a *Flash Gordon*-inspired space opera. I remember moments from what I read in the screenplay, like the Sith murdering Annikin's little brother (How unheard of! A kid being one of the first casualties!), and Kane Starkiller revealing his cybernetic parts; in this comic they just seemed to leap off the page.

Also, maybe I hadn't gotten that far in the draft when I read it a few years ago, but I was surprised to see Arttoo *talking!* *That*, I had never, ever heard about. Any details on that? What is he supposed to sound like?

Keep up the amazing work!

Morgan Cherney

My guess is that Arttwo sounds like your annoying, know-it-all younger brother.

Keep the mail coming, folks! Next month we take a break to give artist Mike Mayhew time to get ahead of the schedule. But we won't leave you high and dry. Check out issue #0, which will give you a look behind the scenes, with early designs by Mr. Mayhew, as well as other artists!

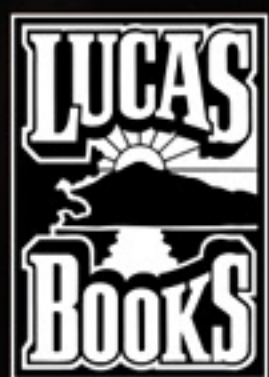
Randy Stradley
editor

Next Issue: Redesigning and predesigning a galaxy!





#5



RINZLER
MAYHEW
BEREDO

BASED ON THE ORIGINAL ROUGH-DRAFT SCREENPLAY BY GEORGE LUCAS

THE

STAR WARS

SAVE THE
PRINCESS—
SAVE THE
GALAXY!



ADAPTED FROM THE ORIGINAL ROUGH-DRAFT SCREENPLAY BY GEORGE LUCAS

THE STAR WARS™

General Darth Vader and his Imperial forces have invaded Aquilae, but the planet won't be theirs until he captures Princess Leia, who, along with her two young brothers, is protected by a legendary Jedi General: Luke Skywalker.

At the Gordon spaceport, with the help of Ureallian smuggler Han Solo and young Padawan Annikin Starkiller, plans are made to escape Aquilae disguised as the crew of a Baltarian freighter. To hide their presence from the Empire, Leia's brothers are placed in suspended animation inside shielded containers—made possible only by the sacrifice of Annikin's dying father.

But Prince Valorum, a Knight of the Sith—and a sworn enemy of the Jedi—is aware of Skywalker's every move . . .

SCRIPT
J. W. RINZLER

ART
MIKE MAYHEW

COLORS
RAIN BEREDO

LETTERING
MICHAEL HEISLER

COVER
NICK RUNGE

DESIGNER
JIMMY PRESLER

ASSISTANT EDITOR
FREDDYE LINS

EDITOR
RANDY STRADLEY

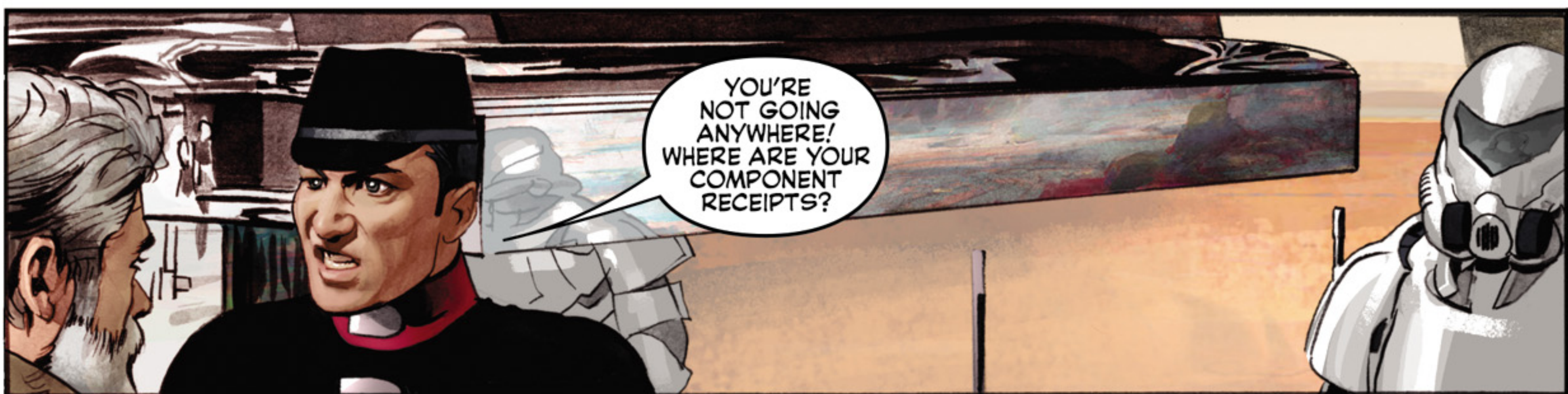
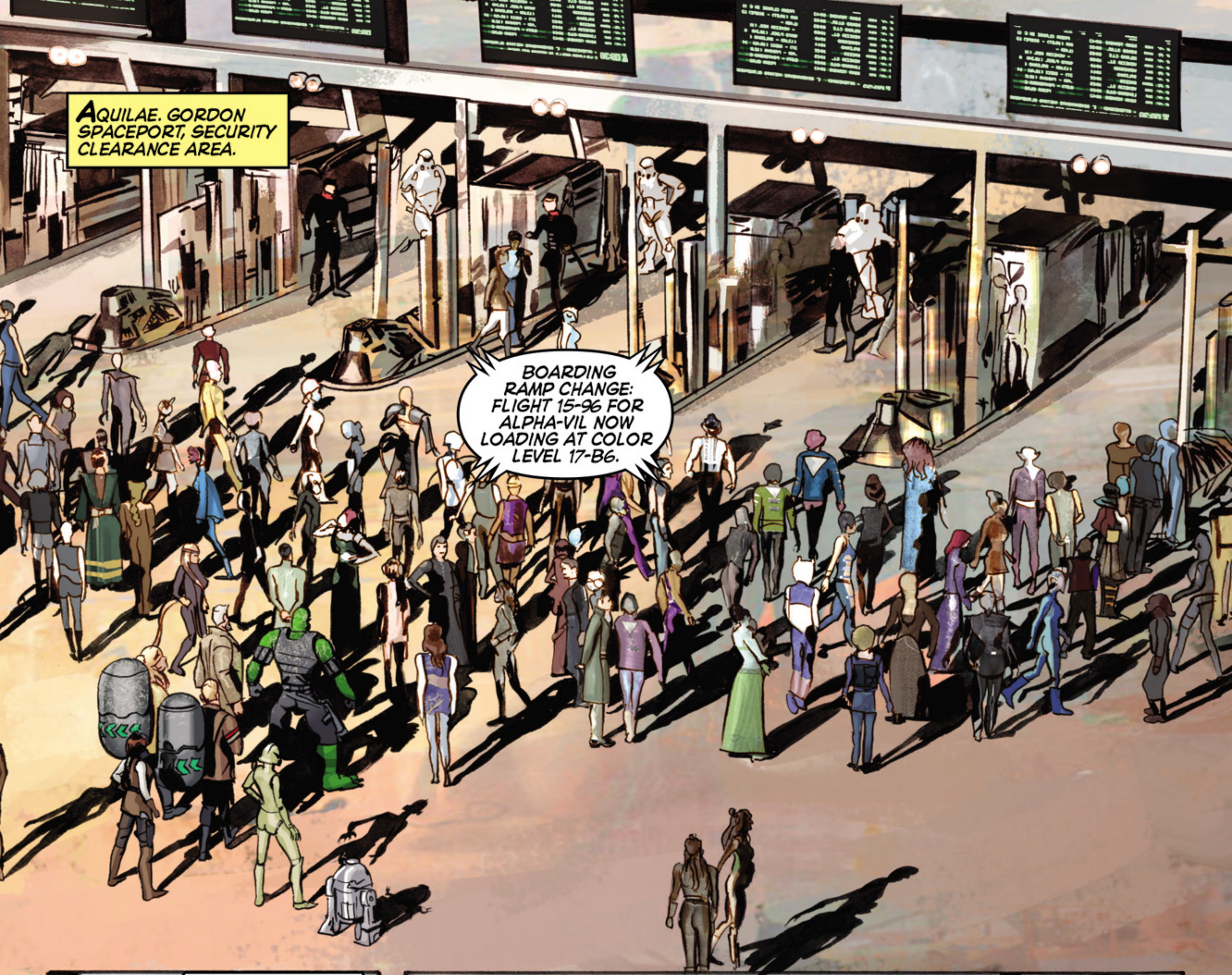
PUBLISHER
MIKE RICHARDSON

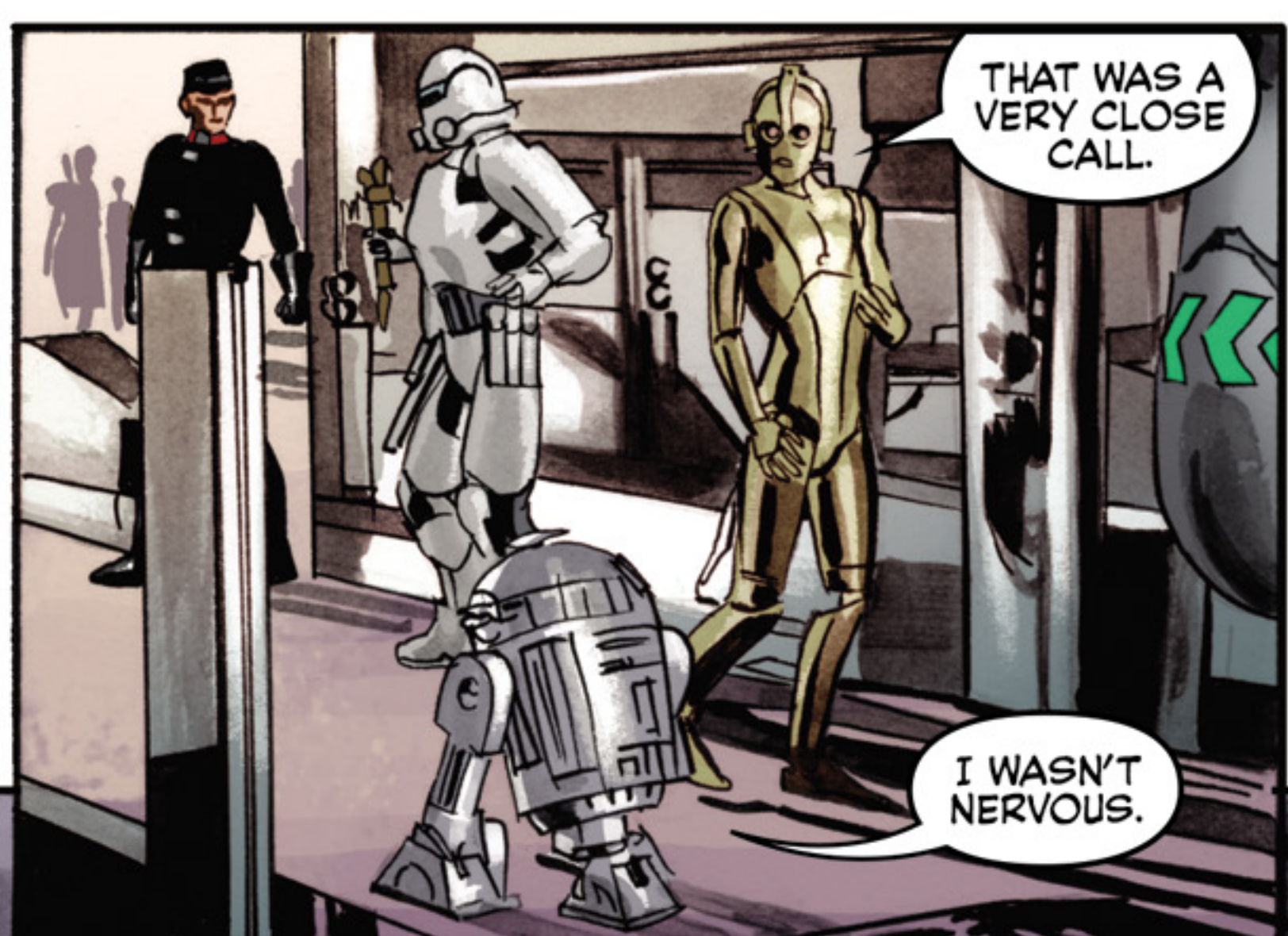
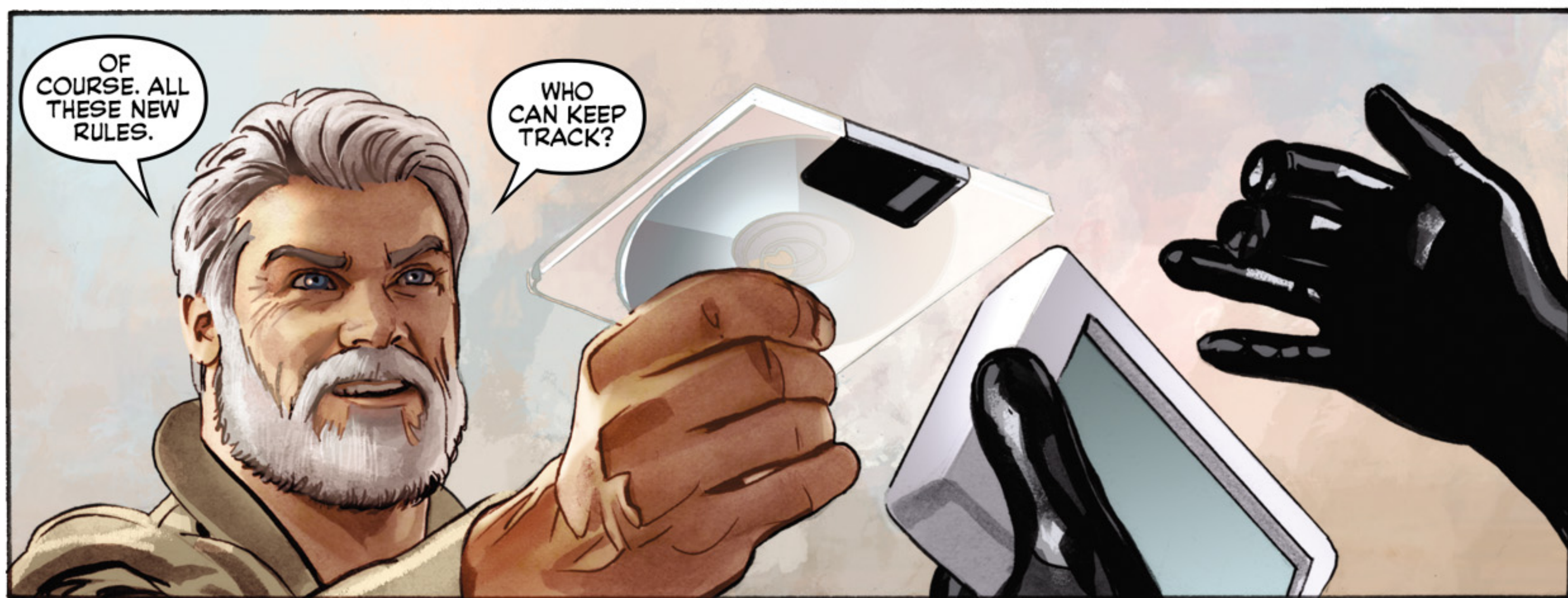
SPECIAL THANKS TO JENNIFER HEDDLE, LELAND CHEE, TROY ALDERS, CAROL ROEDER, JANN MOORHEAD, AND DAVID ANDERMAN AT LUCAS LICENSING.

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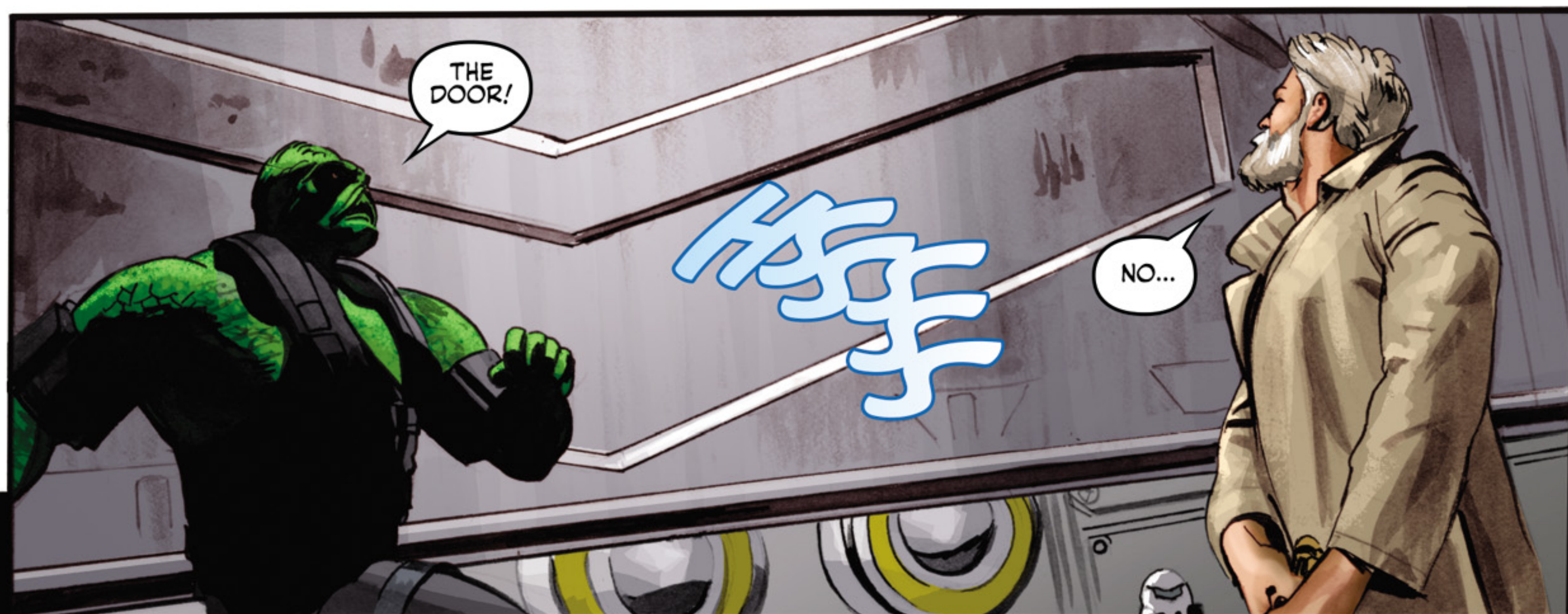
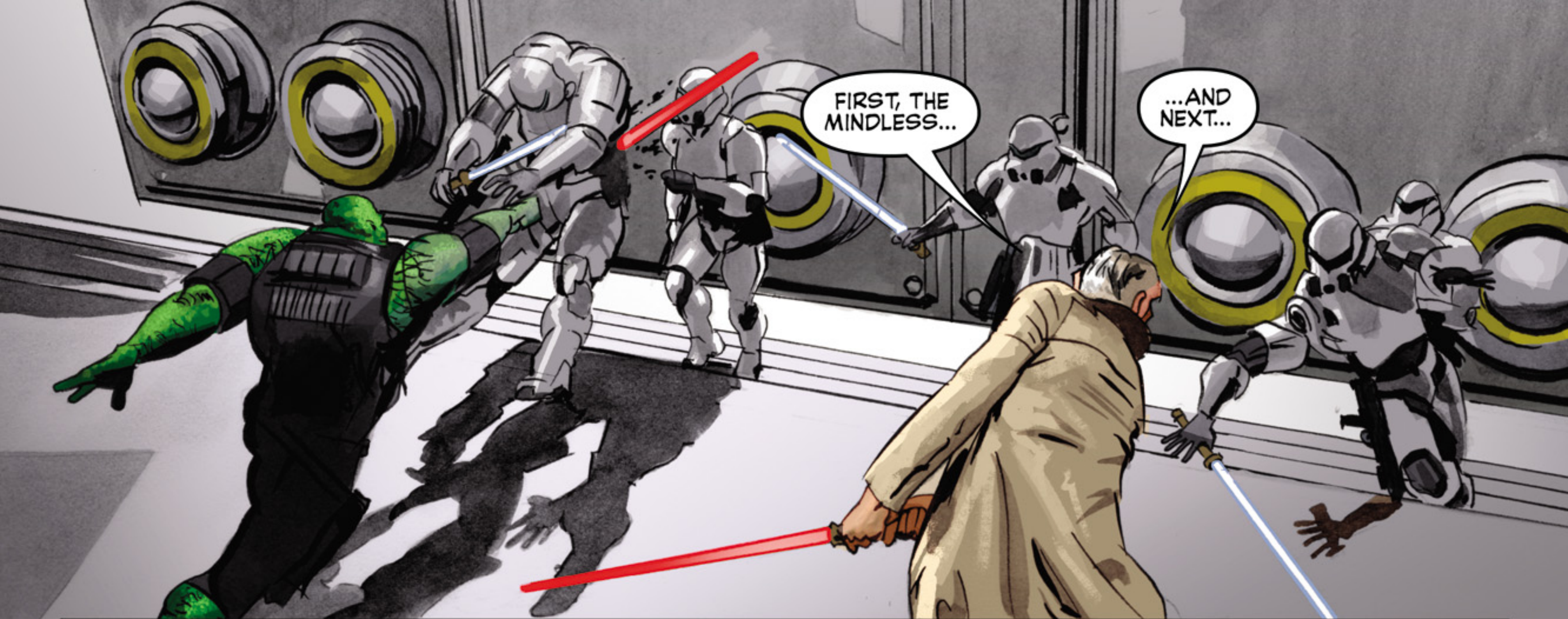
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WHY, YOU OVERCONFIDENT --

SOLO, NO!



GENERAL, PLEASE EXPLAIN TO YOUR SOLDIER THAT THE REST OF YOUR PARTY IS AT MY MERCY.

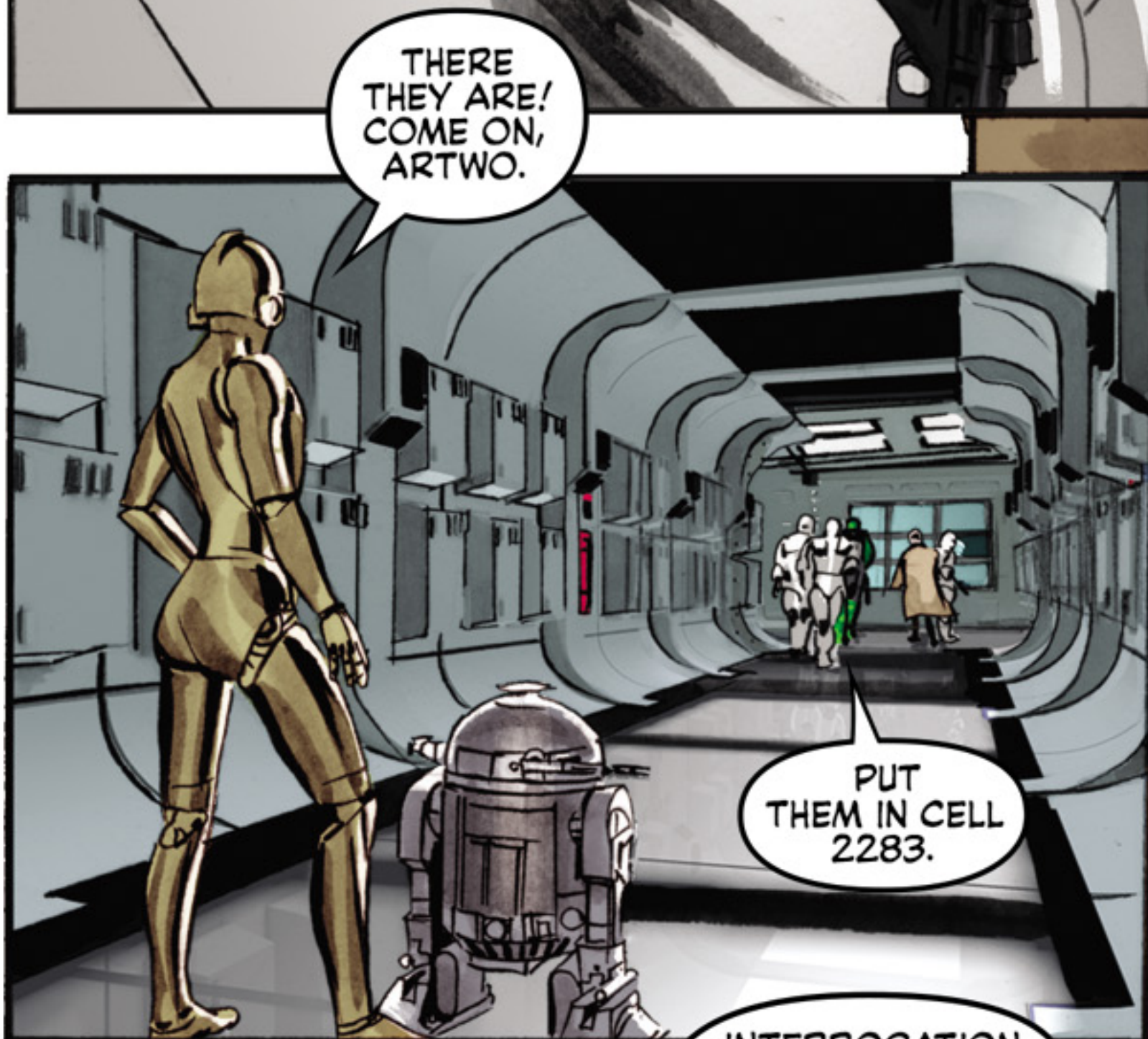


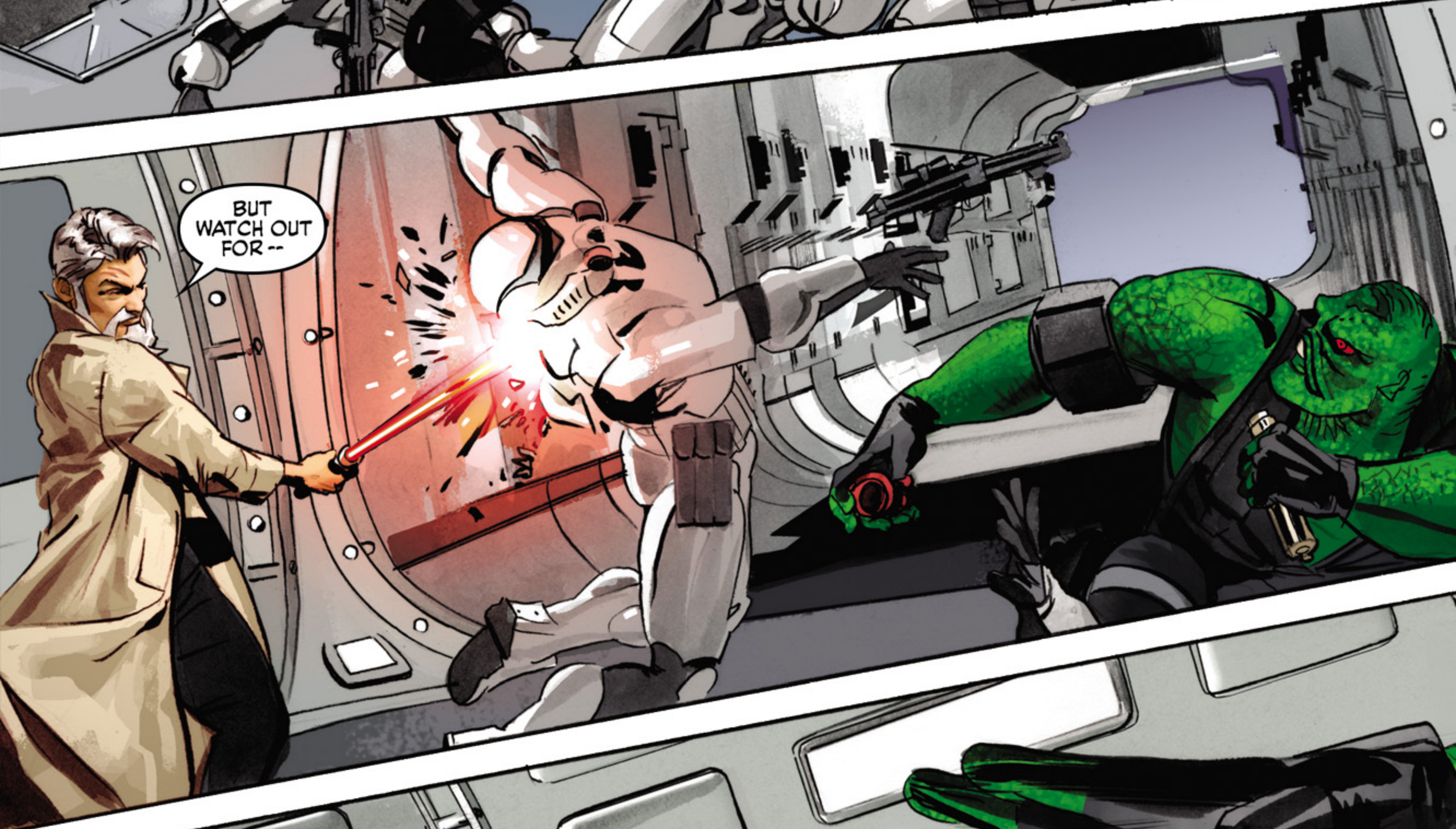
YOU HEARD HIM. THE OTHERS ARE PRISONERS BY NOW.

THE SITH ARE INVULNERABLE TO JAI GAS. WE'RE NOT.



TAKE THEM TO HOLD G. I DON'T WANT THEM WITH THE OTHERS.



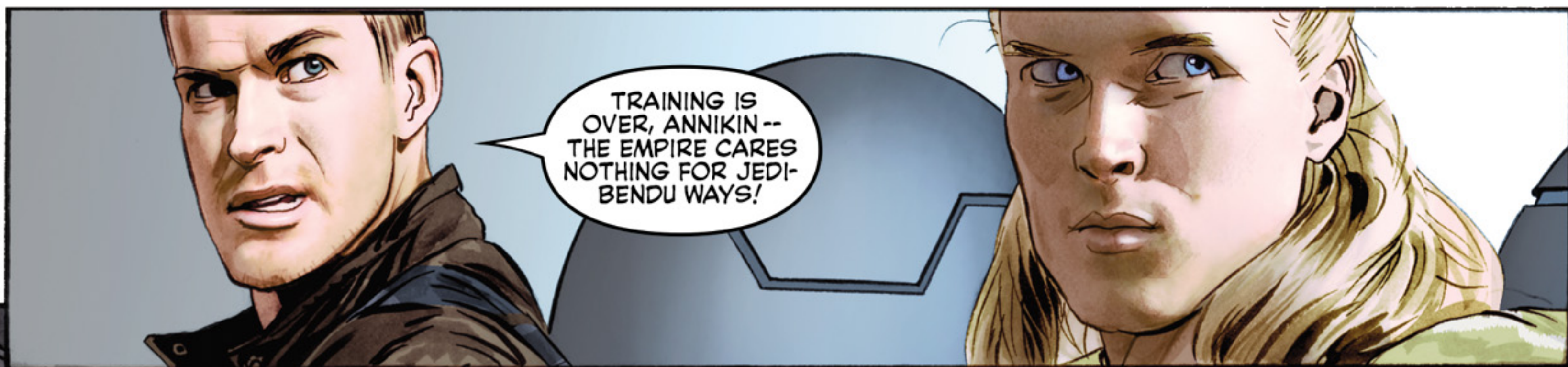


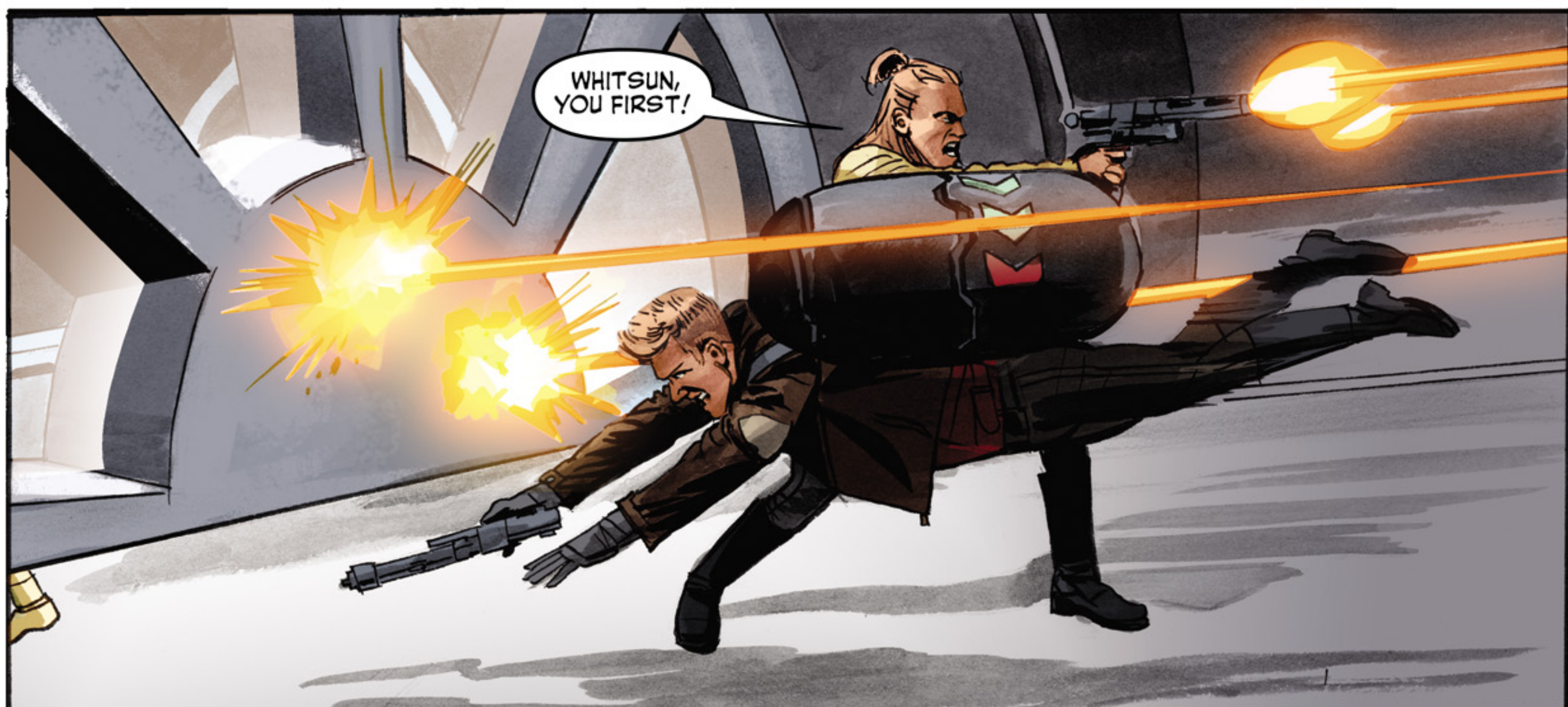


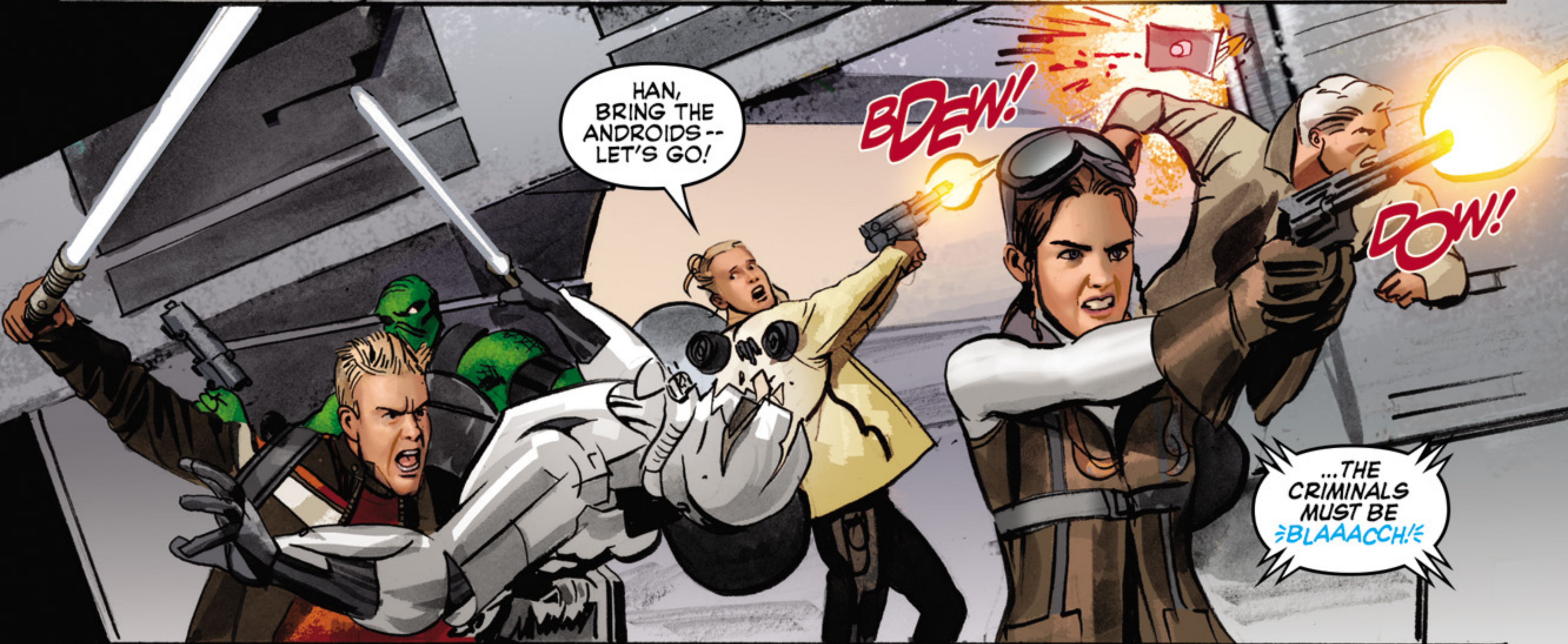
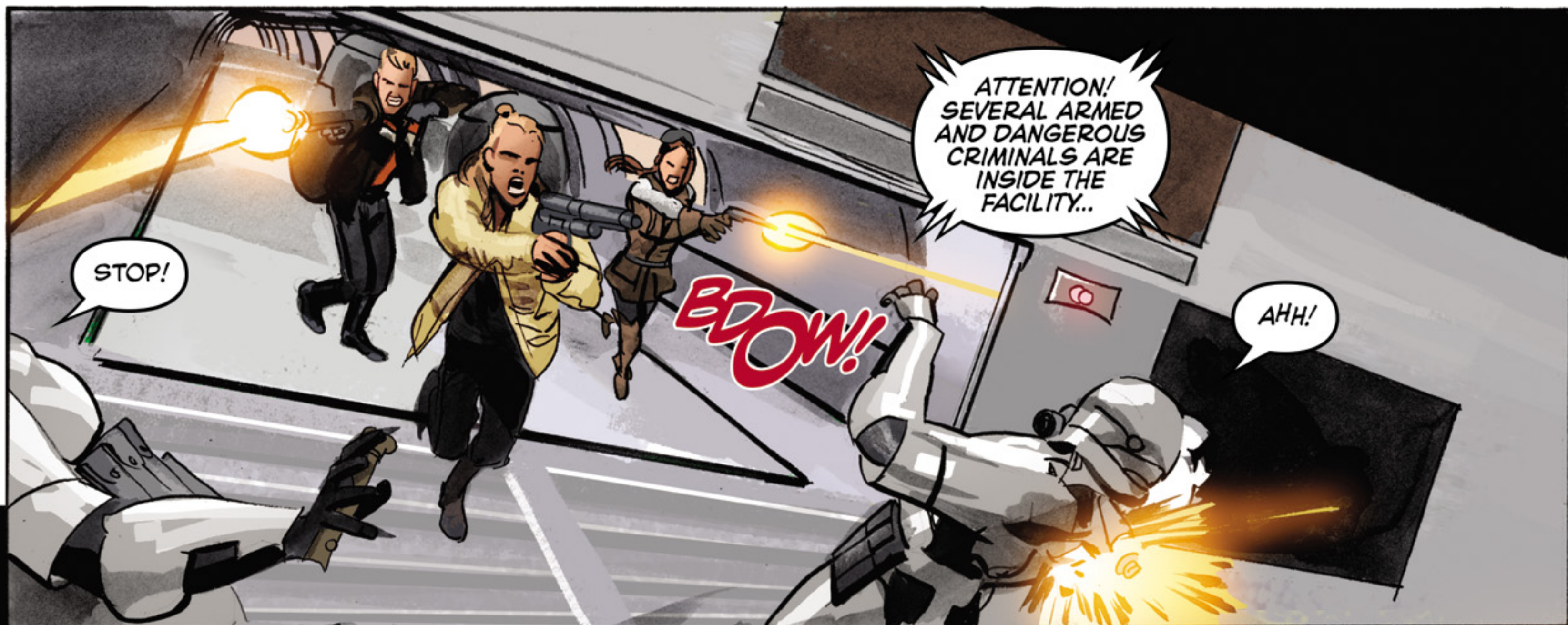
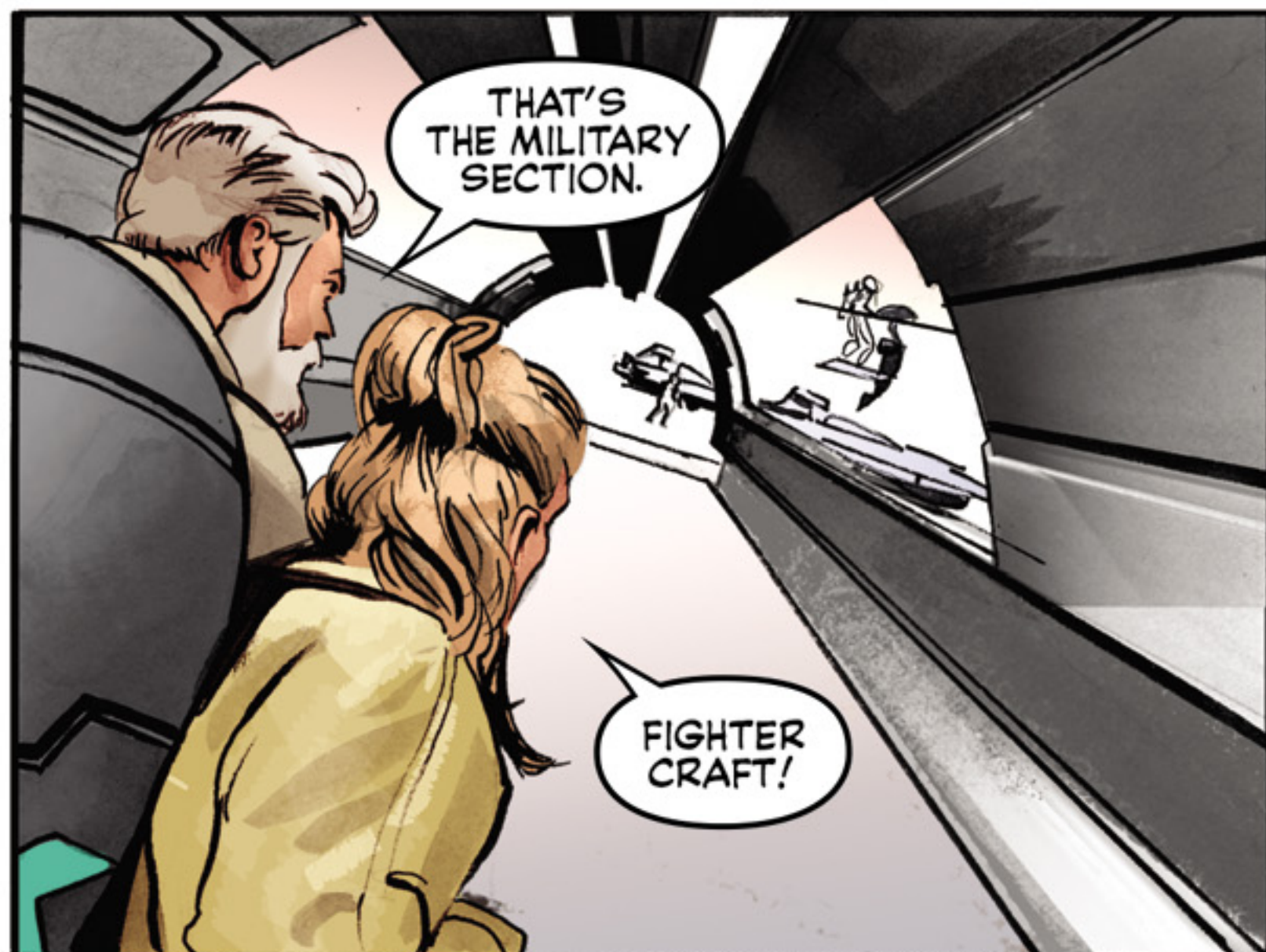


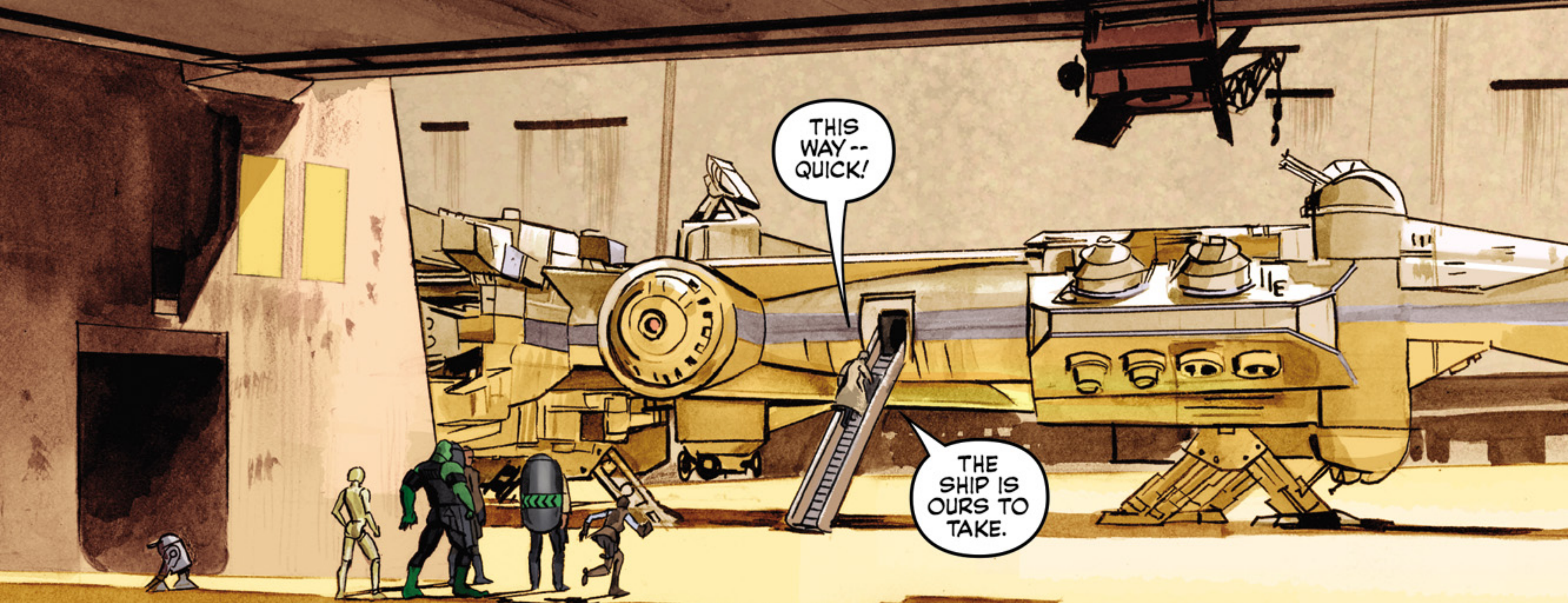












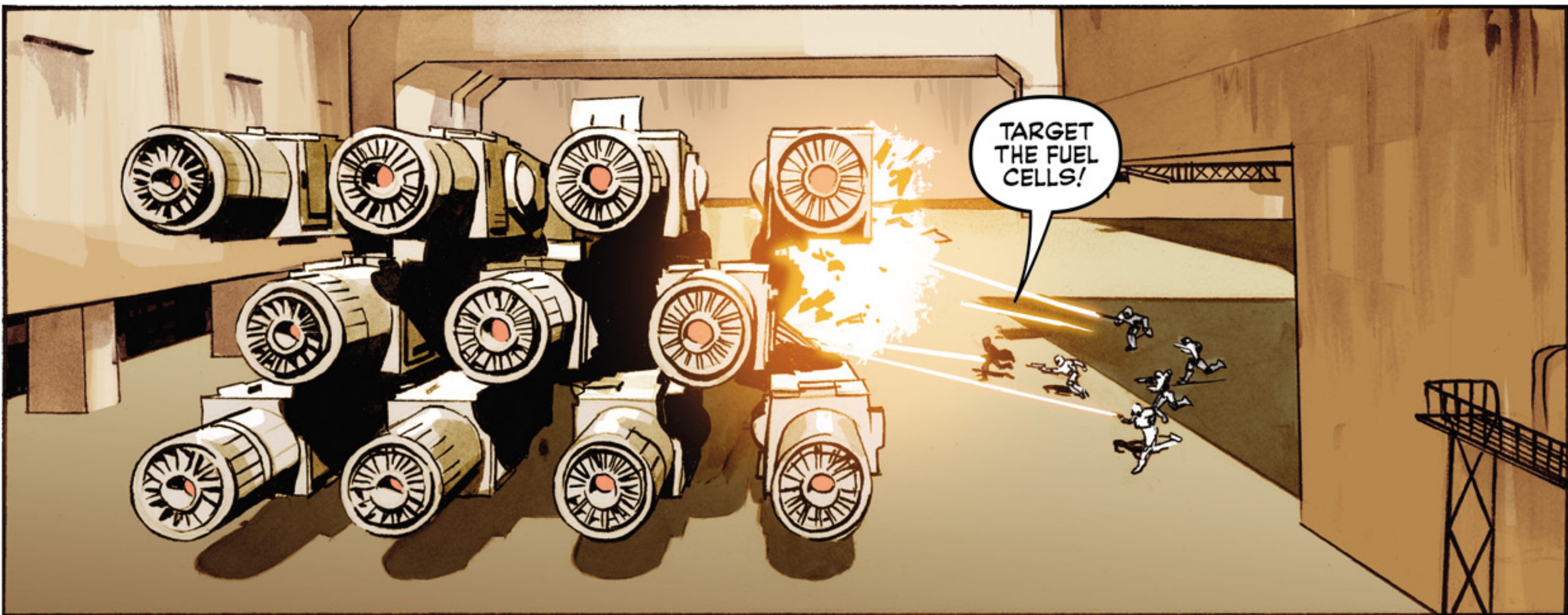
THIS WAY -- QUICK!

THE SHIP IS OURS TO TAKE.



THANK YOU FOR --

WAIT HERE -- AND STRAP YOURSELVES IN!



TARGET THE FUEL CELLS!



WE'RE GOING TO SUSTAIN CONSIDERABLE DAMAGE IF WE BLAST THROUGH THAT SILO COVER.

WE HAVE NO CHOICE, SO LET'S HOPE IT'S A THIN SHELL.



NEXT STOP
-- THE CHROME
COMPANIES OF
OPHUCHI!





WE
SUFFERED LIGHT
DAMAGE TO A
DEFLECTOR FIN.

IT WILL TAKE
THEM SOME TIME
TO CATCH UP WITH
US NOW. EVERYONE
SHOULD GET
SOME REST.

HAVE
THREEPIO
TAKE THE
CONTROLS.



YOU
TWO SHOULD
GET SOME REST.
BETTER STORE THE
BOYS IN A LIFE-
POD.

SECURE THEM
WELL -- AND PLUG
BIGGS'S MICRO-PACK
INTO A POWER
SOURCE.



COULDN'T
WE LET MY
BROTHERS
OUT NOW?

IT'S
BETTER THIS
WAY. THINGS ARE
GOING TO GET
ROUGH SOON...



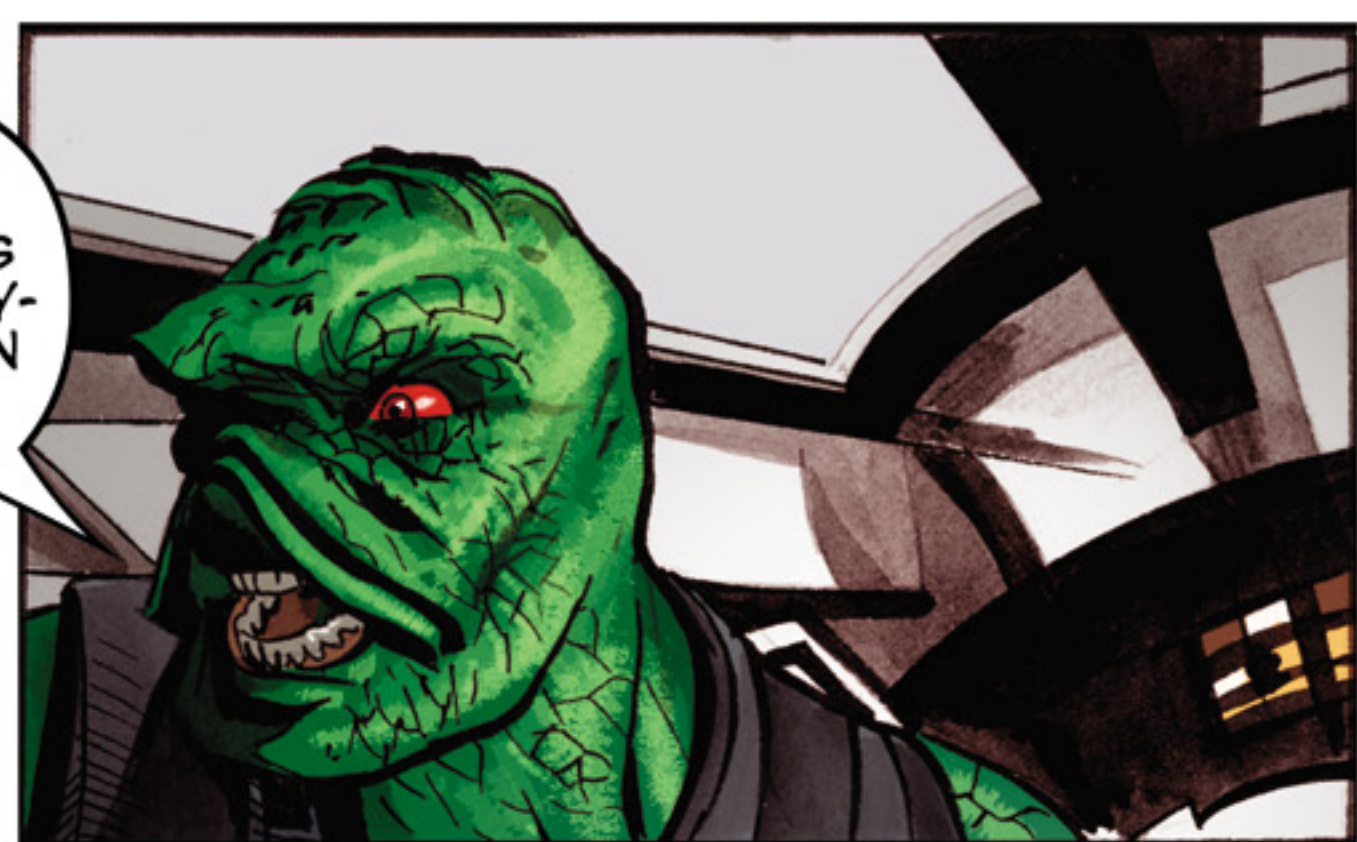
STAY
WITH ME.

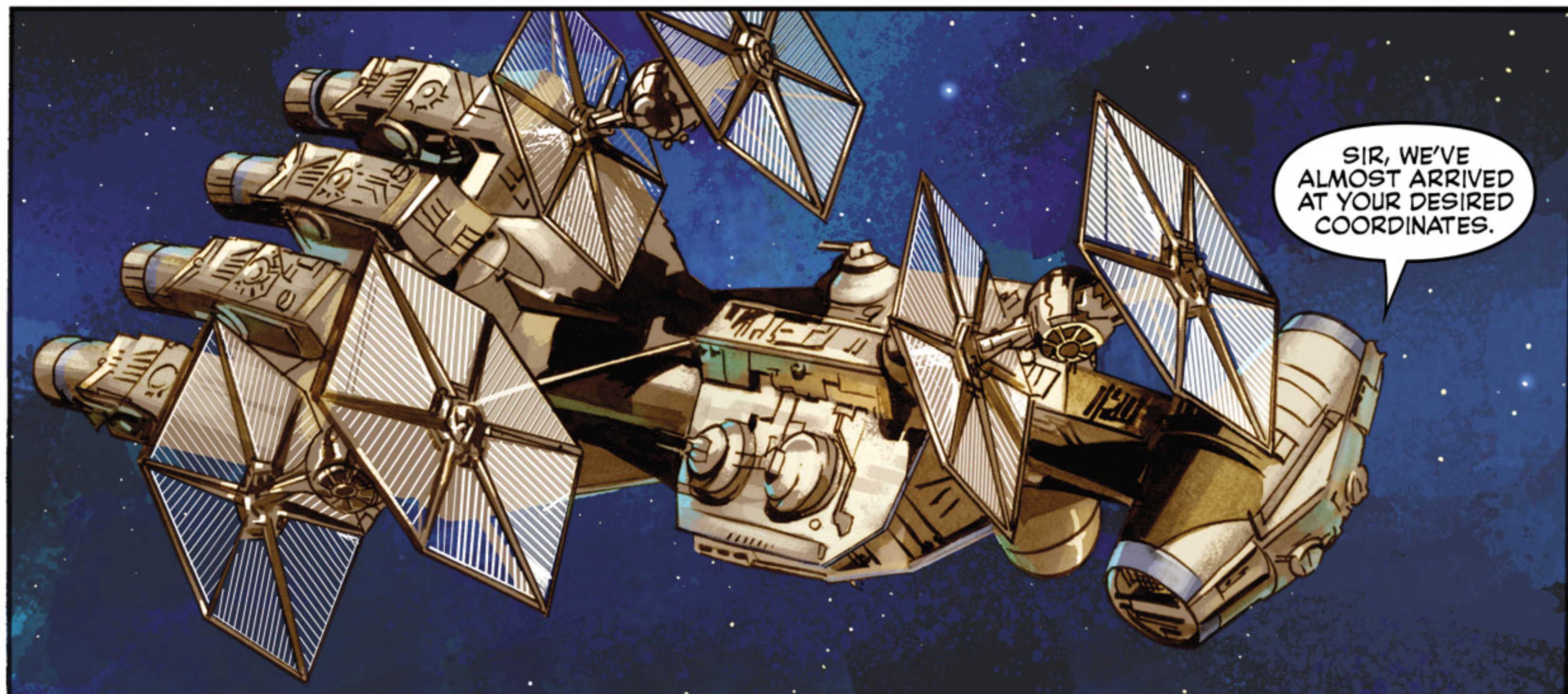
I
WANTED TO
THANK YOU. I
THINK I...

...LOVE
YOU.









SIR, WE'VE
ALMOST ARRIVED
AT YOUR DESIRED
COORDINATES.



I'VE GOT NO
SIGNAL. I'M ON
TARGET. WHAT'S
WRONG? WHAT'S
THE GENERAL
WAITING FOR?!



ANNIKIN,
YOU'VE GOT
TO HOLD FOR
SKYWALKER'S
SIGNAL!



BUT
THEY'RE
BLASTING US
TO BITS!

Next: **WOOKIEE
MADNESS!**

THE STAR WARS

The Star Wars

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Boards.DarkHorse.com

We have so many letters for this series! Thanks to everyone for writing, and please keep sending your comments, questions, and praise—especially praise, 'cause we eat that stuff up like candy! :)

Freddie Lins
assistant editor

I discovered the first issue of *The Star Wars* at Barnes and Noble. Who knew this was out there, based on something original by George Lucas? My brother has been a *Star Wars* fan since the movie came out in 1977. He was surprised when I brought the issue home. Next month, I'll get the next issue!

Madelaine Carrosa
Paramount, California

I've been an avid fan of Dark Horse's *Star Wars* comics for three decades already. I've collected each and every one except for a few rare variant covers. You've even printed more than ten of my letters in your editorials of different *Star Wars* series through the years.

The Star Wars is *super duper fine*! Just the fact that you were able to convince everyone else involved in making this project to make it happen—that is a feat in itself. Kudos to all of you who pushed for this, and of course to George Lucas who started the whole shebang!

JGM Doc Tore
Medstar 3

Just read the first issue of *The Star Wars*. It's really nice to see visually what George Lucas had written in the first half of the 1970s, and all the references to the films! Thank you! Waiting for the next issue!

Unsigned

I just wanted to send you a brief message concerning your excellent comic, *The Star Wars*. Many years ago, I read a bootlegged copy of George Lucas's rough draft. Yes, I know it was an unofficial copy, but until the release of your comic, there was no official version!

When I read that the Stardestroyers in the rough draft were small snub ships, I imagined them as looking just like their giant-sized counterparts in the films, just scaled right down to a smaller size. (Incidentally, I read that the art department on Episode II: *Attack of the Clones* based the Jedi Aethersprite fighters on this idea! I saw the 1974 version as a more aggres-

sive, industrial looking iteration of these same ships.) Imagine how pleased I was when I saw your comic-book version of these mini Stardestroyers, and they looked *exactly* as I'd envisaged. Amazing! As if you'd peered into my imagination.

Keep up the good work! I can't wait to see what happens next.

Alex
United Kingdom

Ever since I heard and read in interviews with George Lucas that there had been earlier versions of the scripts for *Star Wars* that were quite different from what became the movies, I've been curious about what that first vision of the saga was like. I've imagined all sorts of possibilities over the years and it's great to see this superbly done version of it in comic-book form. Dark Horse rides to our rescue to bring us a fresh new story yet again.

It's interesting to see all the familiar names applied to different characters and locations. It's also curious to see the similar themes from the movies play out in what seem to be quite different ways here. I'm looking forward to the next installment with almost as much anticipation that I had way back in the 1970s when I was a little kid watching the end of Episode IV. I could hardly wait until Episode V came out to see what happened next.

I love the art style with its high detail and almost anime-like shadow and light effects. The writing is amazing too, keeping that 1940s Saturday matinee feel while honed for today's audience.

Thanks for taking a familiar old friend (*Star Wars* has been part of my life since I was six years old) and breathing brand new life into it. I feel like C-3PO coming out of his oil bath. :)

John W. Enfield
Las Vegas, Nevada

I have been salivating waiting for this to come out. *Mind blown!* While the art and feel is always top notch on all your *Star Wars* books, this really took it to another level. I was not ready for so many differences in the story I know by heart, so I am on the edge of my seat wondering where this early vision is going to take us!

Chris Gentz
Wallhalben, Germany

I am excited by this series! I have been a *Star Wars* fan since I can remember—about thirty years now. Many familiar yet different things in this series are already intriguing. I can't wait for issue #3. I'm anxious to see what Ureallians look like, since Han Solo is to be one here. Thank you for bringing this to life, Dark Horse.

Freerk Kuiper
Guelph, Ontario, Canada

The Star Wars issue #4 was full of action and surprises. Han Solo's appearance in *The Star Wars* is very different from his traditional appearance, and it was quite shocking to see the strange alien step out of the shadows. One of the things that I love most about *The Star Wars* is artist Mike Mayhew's beautiful renderings, which reinterpret the familiar and iconic *Star Wars* characters, vehicles, and settings in a new light. Rain Beredo's colors complement Mayhew's art nicely, and give the comic a beautiful, lush look that is making *The Star Wars* one of my favorite comics.

Reed Beebe
Kansas City, Missouri

I couldn't wait any longer to chip in along with everyone else. People seem to think you all have burped up a masterpiece here. They praise the writing, art, and any and all things that flow from the fingers of team *The Star Wars*. Someone needed to set people straight on anything related to the subject matter here. So it's me. You think Shakespeare spews forth from Lucas and Rinzler's minds. You get all electrically charged about what you perceive as golden creations that flow from the pens of Mayhew. People, you are so correct! Your keen sense of things *Star Wars* knows when quality is created. *Bravo!* I say, *bravo!*

Mary Fortner Smith
Anderson, South Carolina

I just read *The Star Wars* #4! I really liked the fight scene in the desert! This version of Han Solo is awesome! Will he get his own series? If so, that would be great! I can't wait to read issue #5!

Troy Vevasis

It's awesome to see the characters and the *Star Wars* universe the way George Lucas originally conceived it! As much as I'm enjoying the comics, this would've been an awful movie. The characters

are all two dimensional (no pun intended), with each one being only one aspect of the final, more rounded versions.

I have one question that I haven't seen answered on the message boards: Why does everything happen at zero three hundred? Every time an event is planned, or a recent incident is discussed, it occurs at zero three hundred. Are there multiple zero three hundreds in a day? Are the days just incredibly short? Does Luke Skywalker like to plan his business around a part-time night class he's taking at the local community college?

Jordan Braun

I will admit that the second issue of George Lucas's original *Star Wars* draft left me dizzy, but the third one put me right back up to speed on what was going on, with some great action sequences and amazing artwork. I cannot stress enough how fun a title it has been so far and we're not even halfway there yet. I look forward to seeing more "new" characters in the next installment.

Nick Zaromatidis

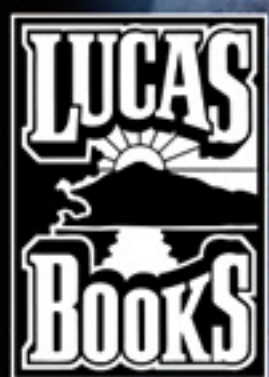
Next month:

The Forbidden System—and Wookiees!





#6



RINZLER
MAYHEW
BEREDO

BASED ON THE ORIGINAL ROUGH-DRAFT SCREENPLAY BY GEORGE LUCAS

THE STAR WARS



**ANNIKIN STARKILLER—
LOST IN THE FORBIDDEN SYSTEM!**

ADAPTED FROM THE ORIGINAL ROUGH-DRAFT SCREENPLAY BY GEORGE LUCAS

THE STAR WARS™

General Darth Vader and his Imperial forces have invaded Aquilae, but the planet won't be theirs until they capture Princess Leia, who, along with her two young brothers, is protected by the legendary Jedi General Luke Skywalker, his apprentice Annikin Starkiller, Han Solo, and Captain Whitsun.

After an ambush by the Sith Knight Prince Valorum at the Gordon Spaceport, Leia and her champions made a narrow escape, succeeded in commandeering an Imperial starship, and blasted into space.

Headed for the Ophuchi system's Chrome Companies—which have offered help to the princess and Aquilae—the fugitives are soon overtaken and attacked by Imperial hunter destroyers . . .

SCRIPT
J. W. RINZLER

ART
MIKE MAYHEW

COLORS
RAIN BEREDO

LETTERING
MICHAEL HEISLER

COVER
NICK RUNGE

DESIGNER
JIMMY PRESLER

ASSISTANT EDITOR
FREDDYE LINS

EDITOR
RANDY STRADLEY

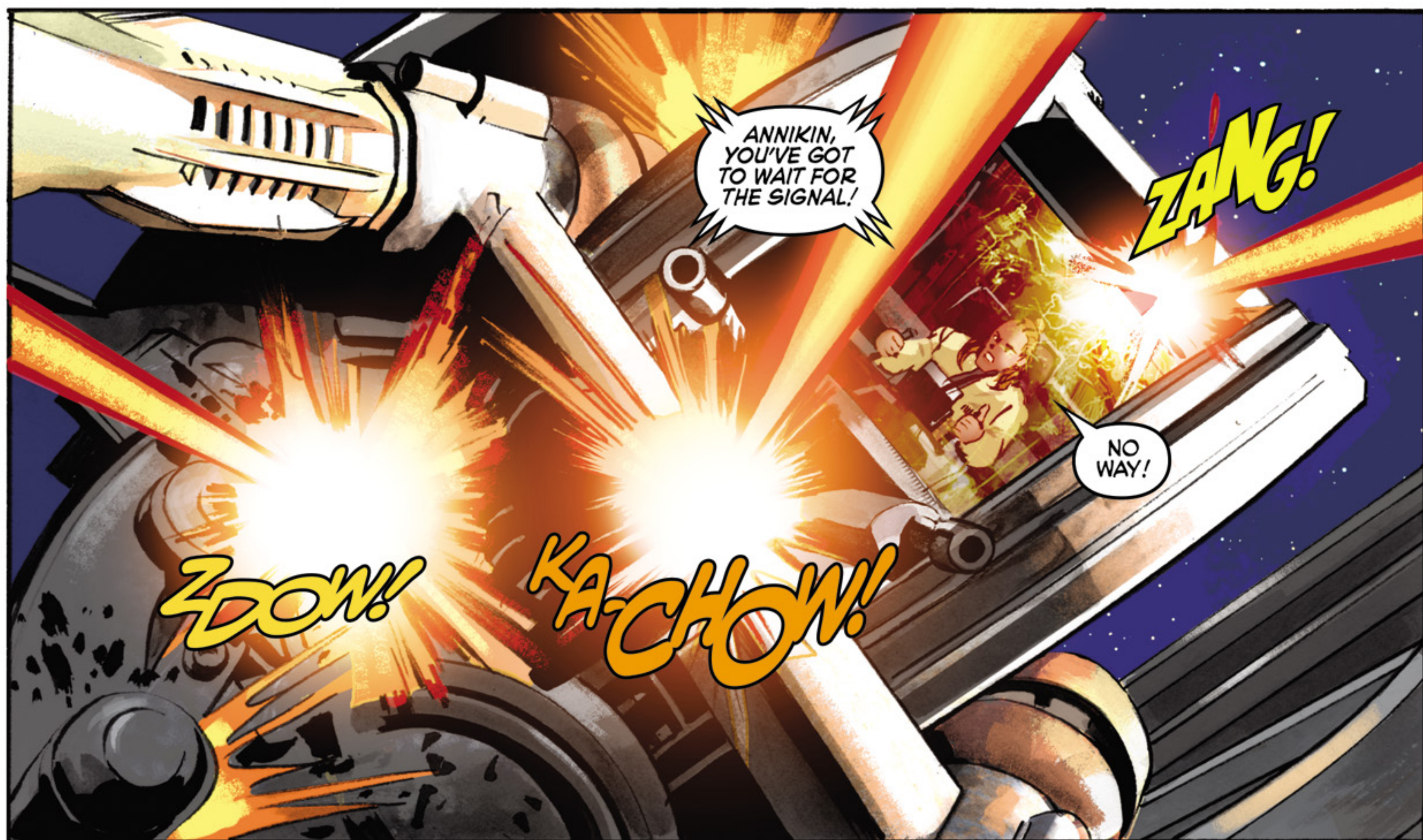
PUBLISHER
MIKE RICHARDSON

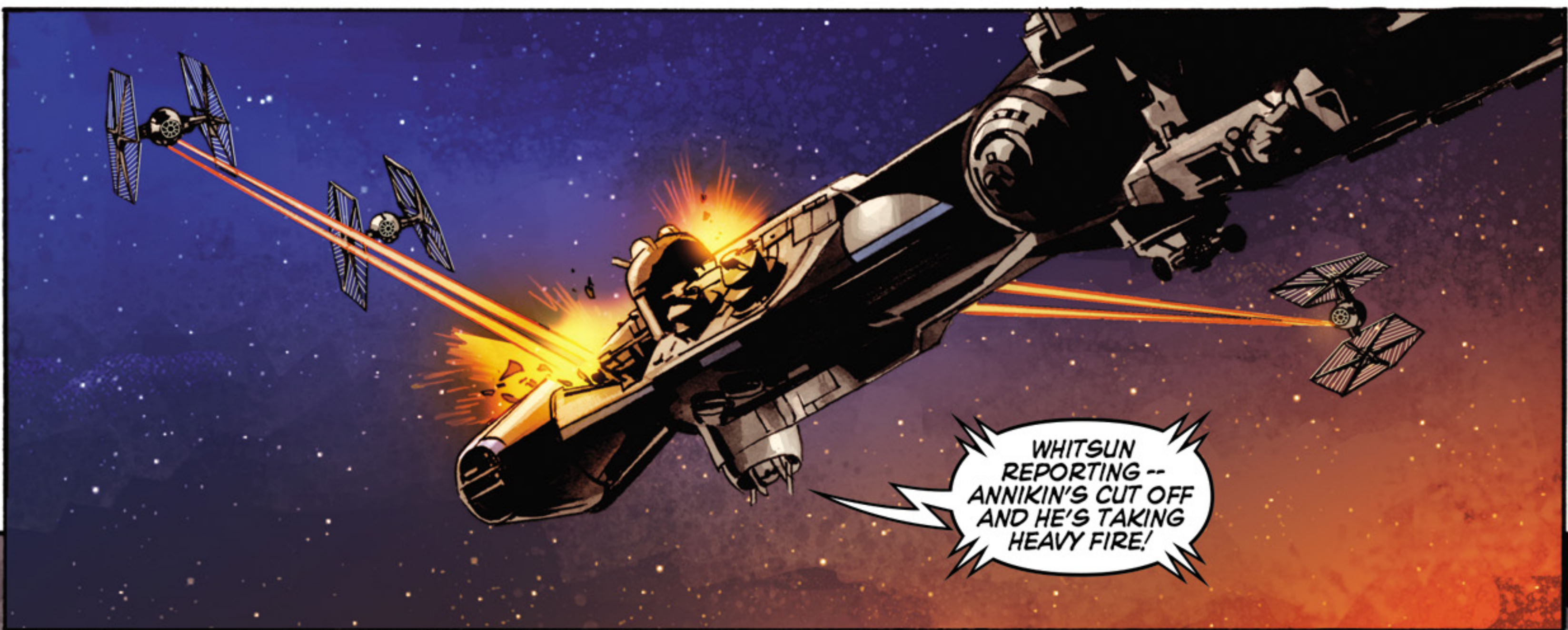
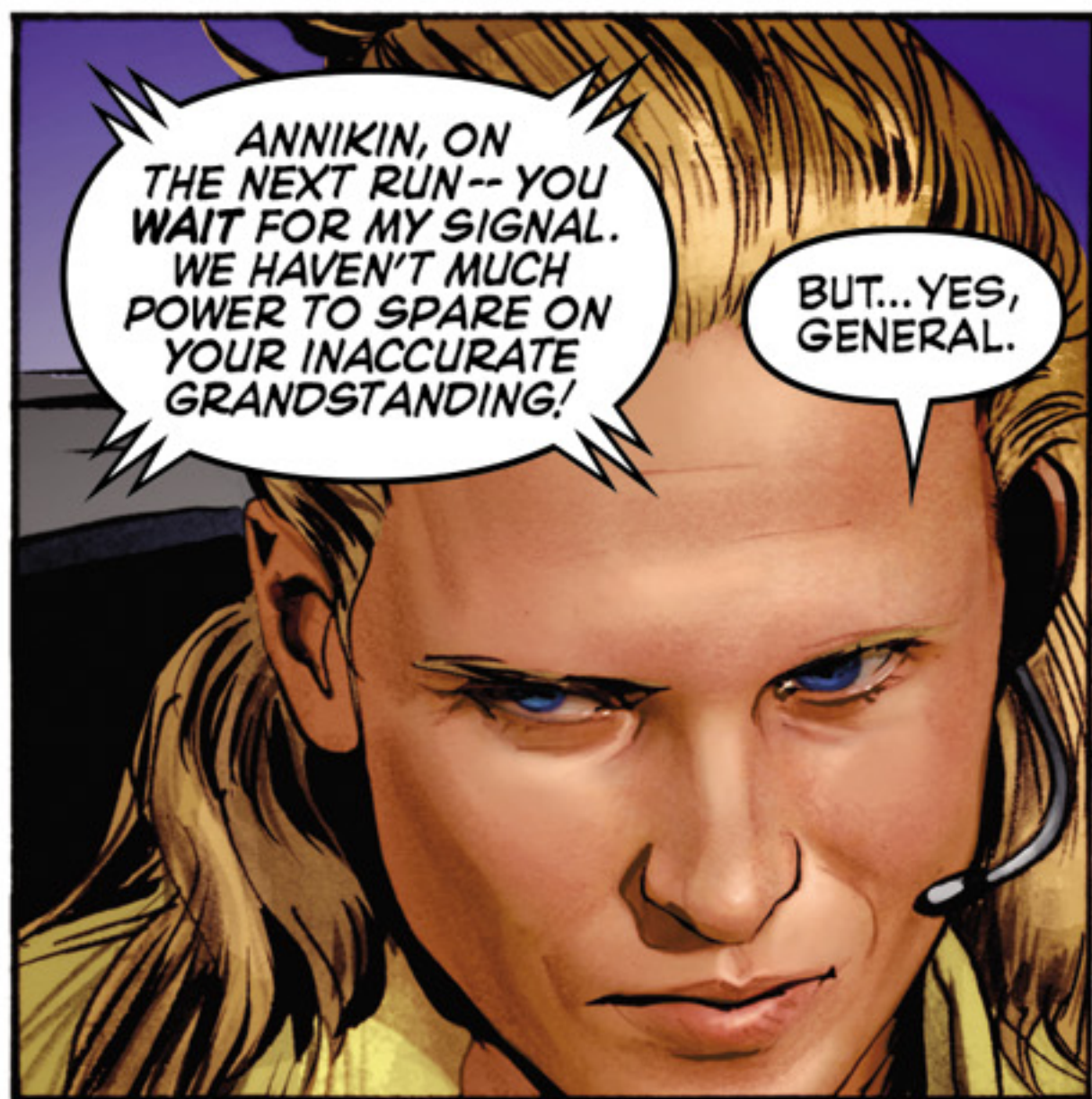
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CAN'T BREATHE...



ARTWO,
GO HELP
STARKILLER!



MORE
HUNTER-DESTROYERS
APPROACHING! LOOKS
LIKE AT LEAST SIX OR
SEVEN.



CHANGE
COURSE TO
THREE POINT
ONE.



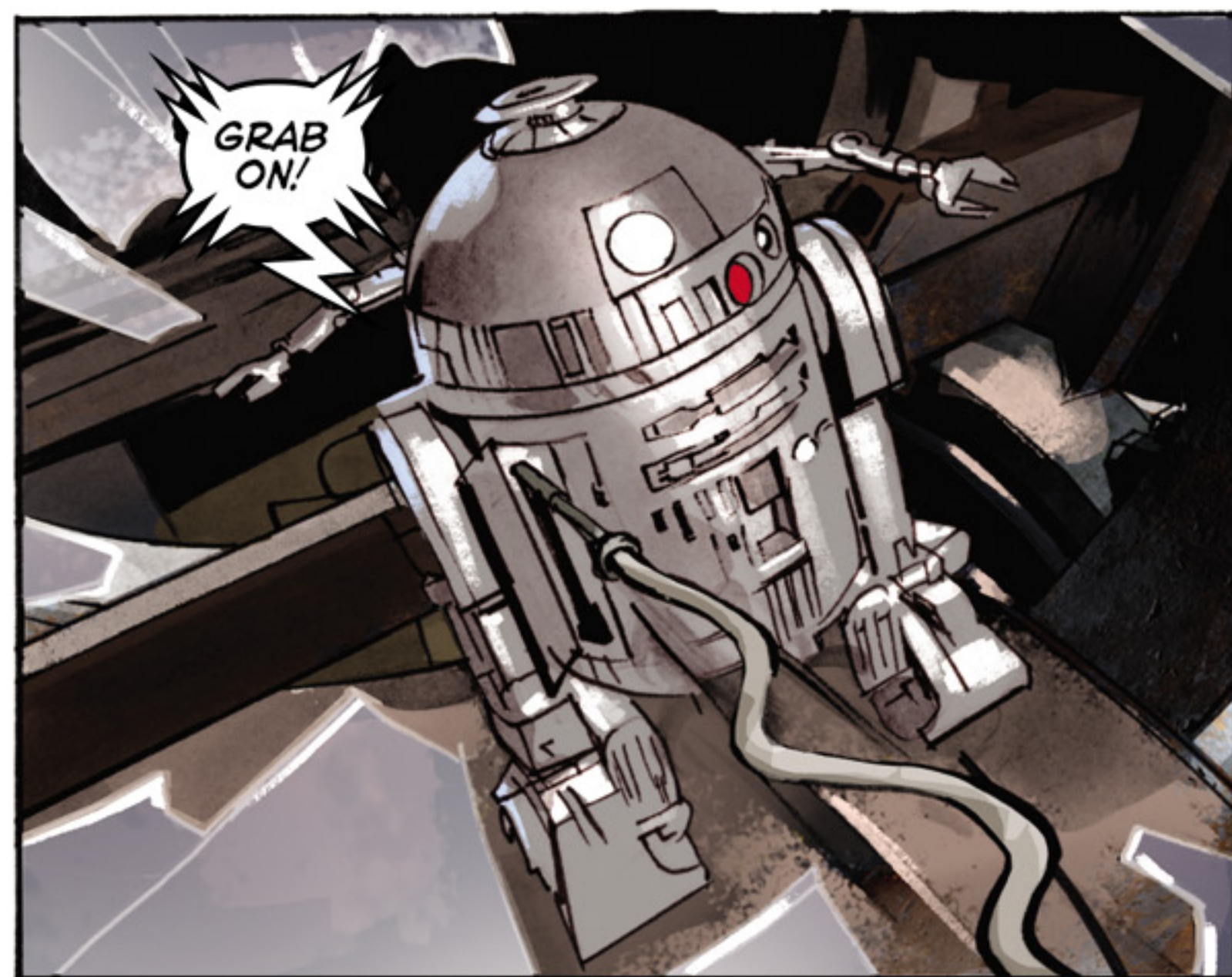
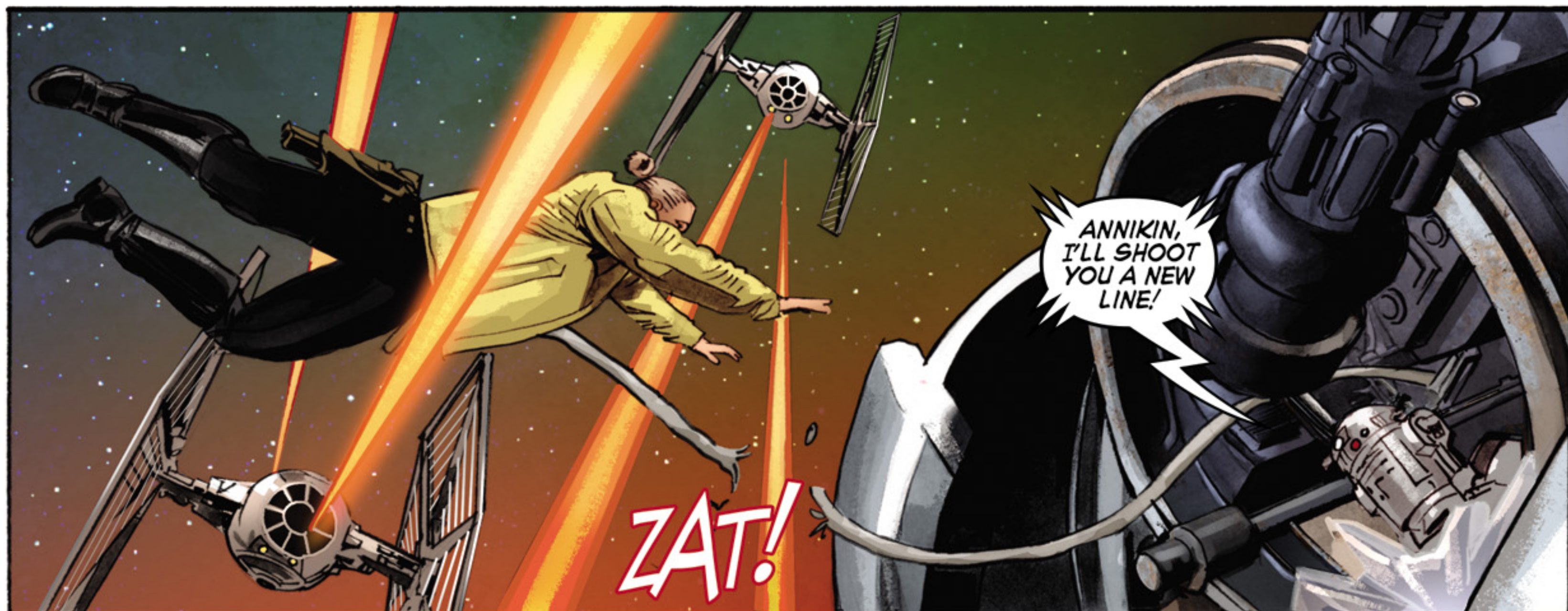
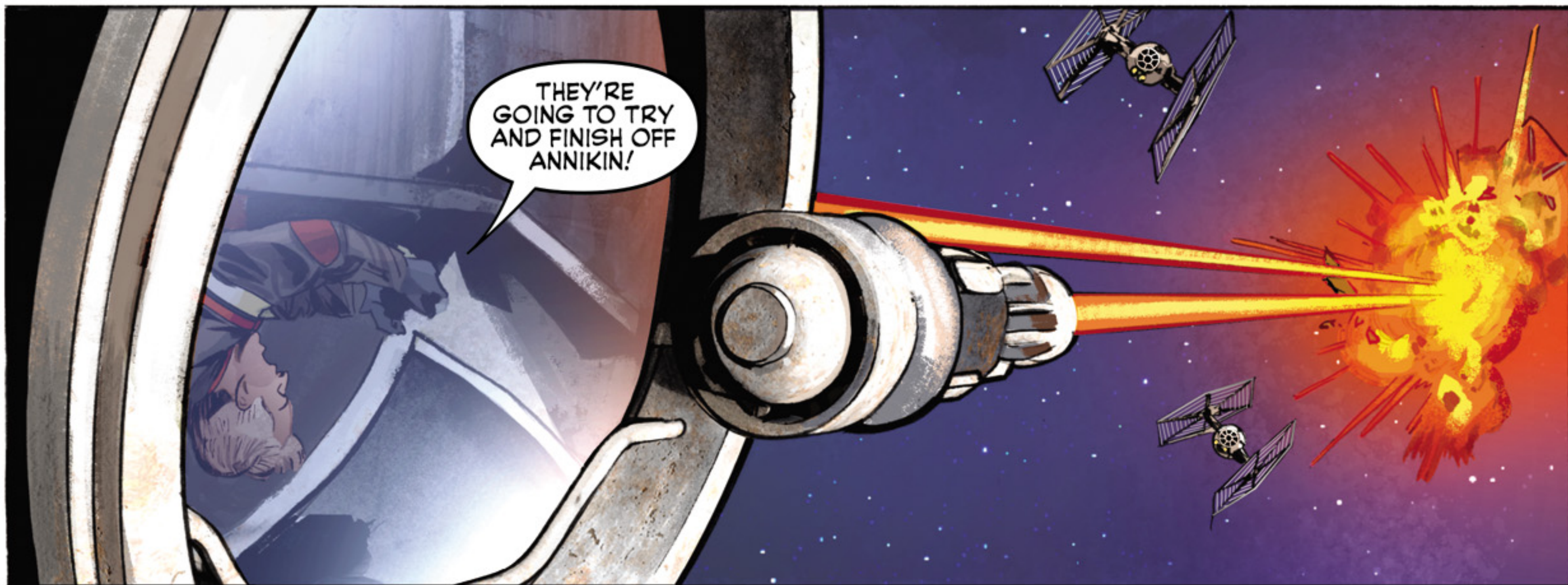
THAT
WILL HEAD US
DIRECTLY INTO THE
PATH OF THE NORTON
ASTEROID BELT! IT'S
TOO DENSE TO PASS
THROUGH--THE SHIP
WON'T MAKE IT!



WE'LL
NEVER DEFEAT
ALL OF THEM IN
COMBAT. IT'S OUR
ONLY CHANCE TO
LOSE THEM!

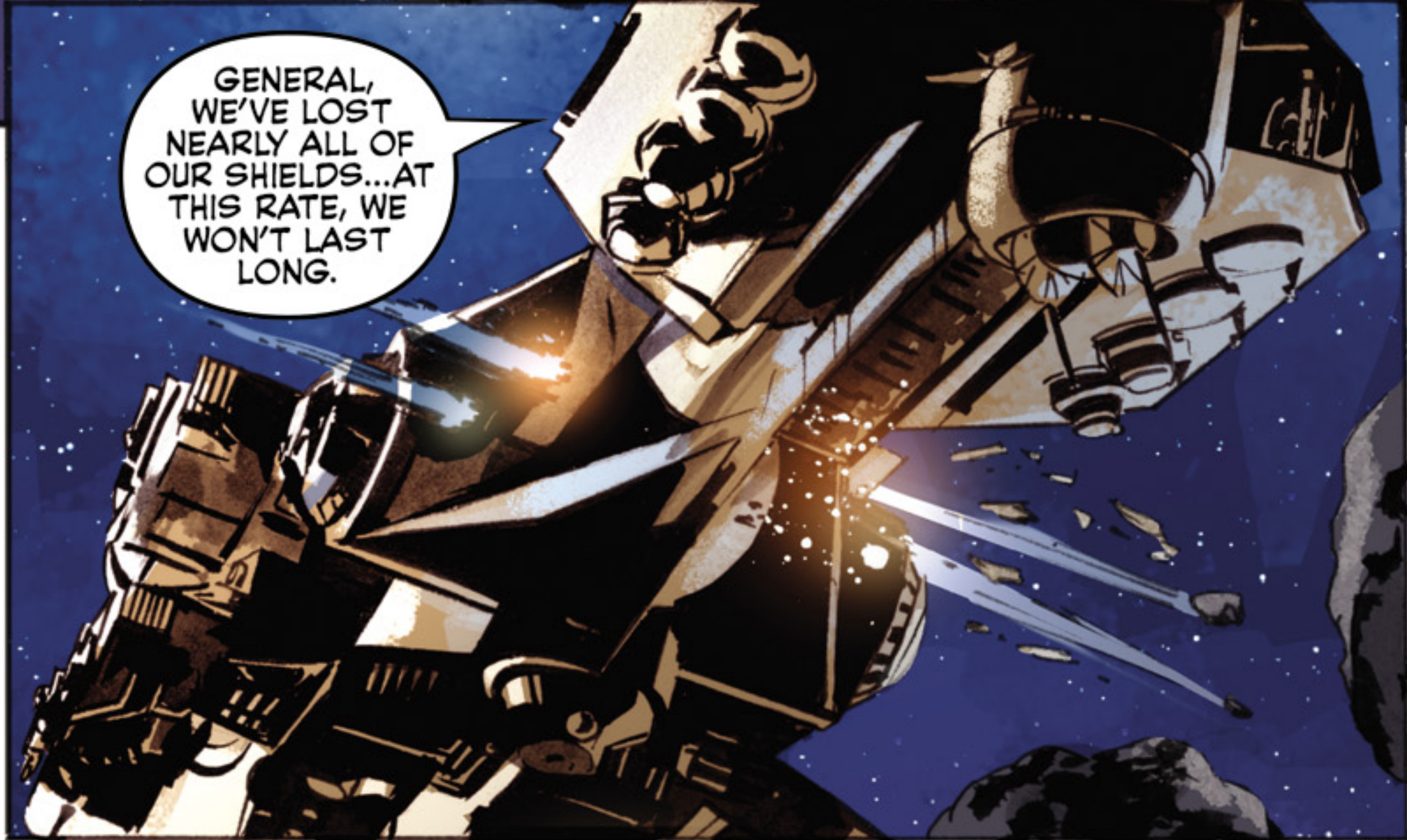


SIR,
THE BREACH
HAS BEEN SEALED
-- BUT THEY'RE
STILL HOT ON
OUR TAIL.





ALL HANDS, SECURE YOURSELVES -- WE'VE ENTERED THE ASTEROID BELT.



GENERAL, WE'VE LOST NEARLY ALL OF OUR SHIELDS...AT THIS RATE, WE WON'T LAST LONG.



WE MAY HAVE TO EJECT. WHITSUN, ABANDON THE TURRET.



IS HE HURT?

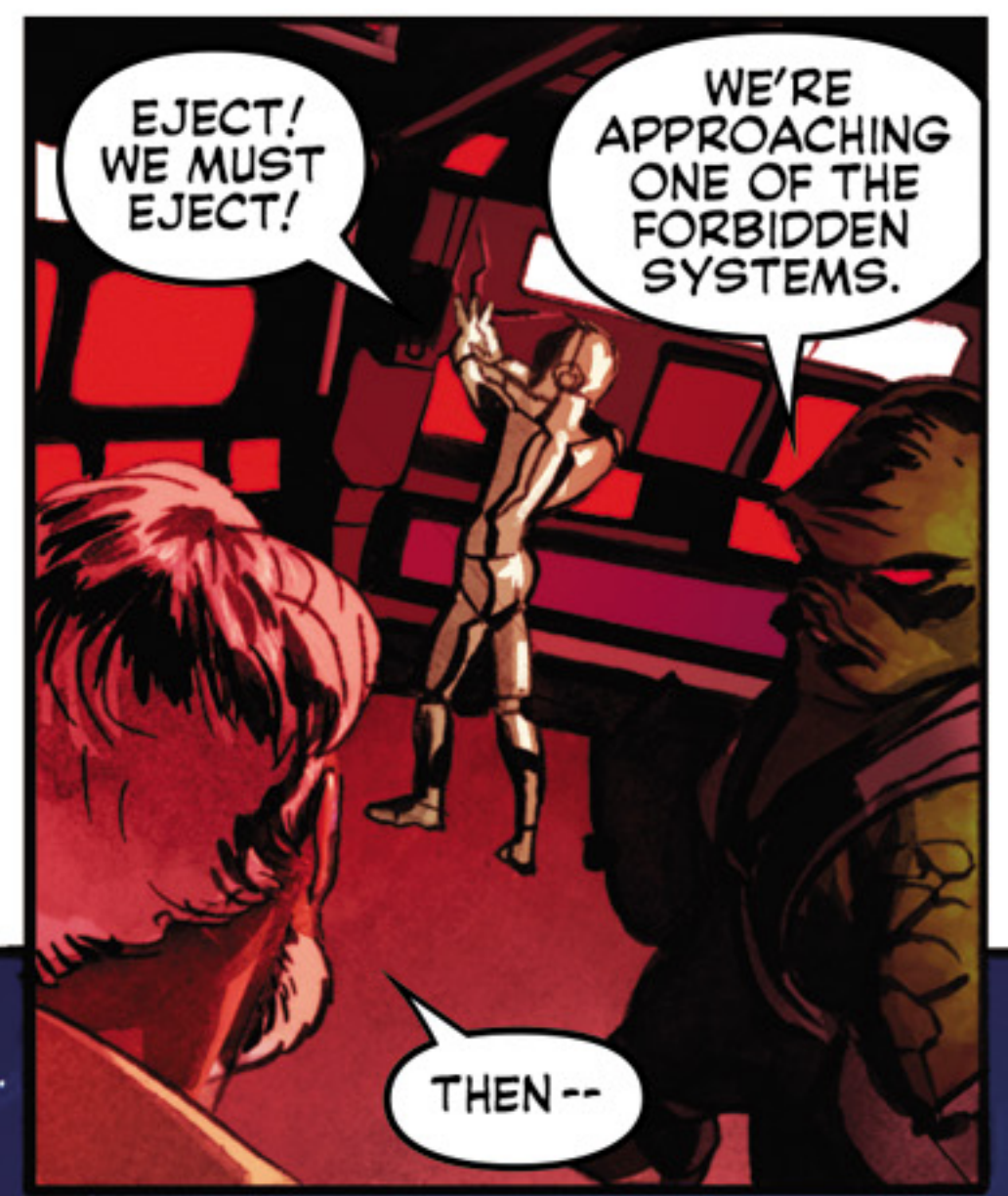
HE'LL BE --

LEIA, THERE'S... SOMETHING --

SAVE IT, ANNIKIN.



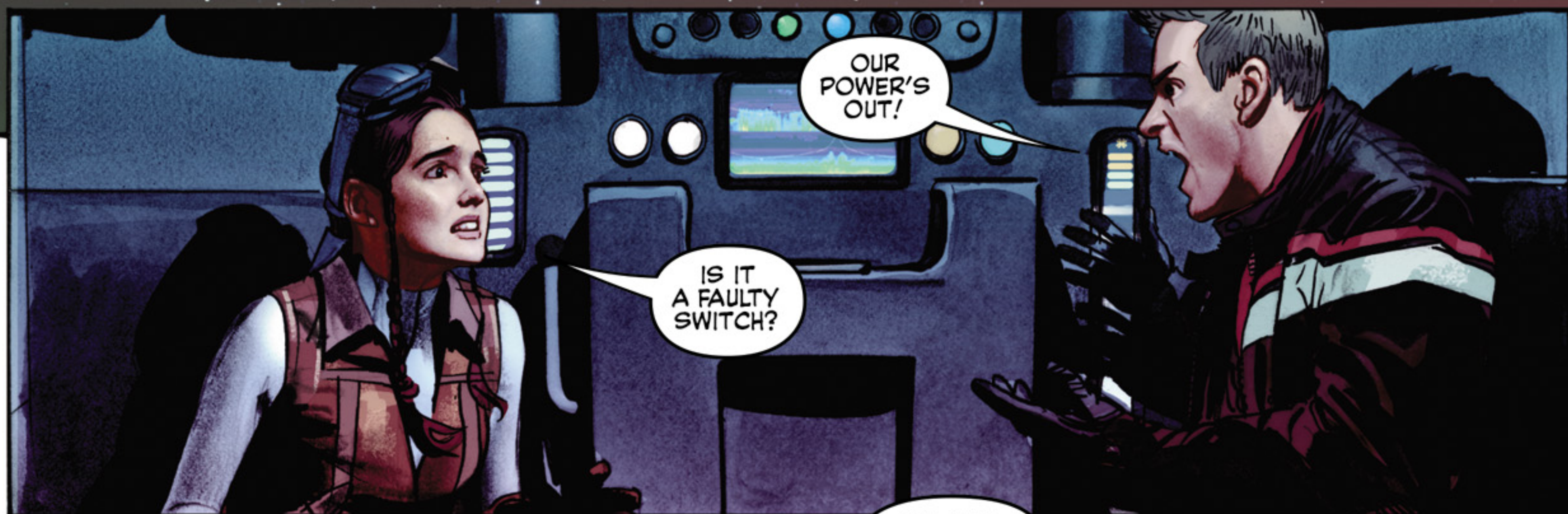
ANNIKIN ALMOST SUFFOCATED. BUT EVER SINCE I SAVED HIM, HE KEEPS REPEATING YOUR NAME.







GENERAL,
I COUNT ONLY
THREE LIFE-PODS
EJECTED...



OUR
POWER'S
OUT!

IS IT
A FAULTY
SWITCH?

NO. THE
WHOLE BANK
IS OUT.

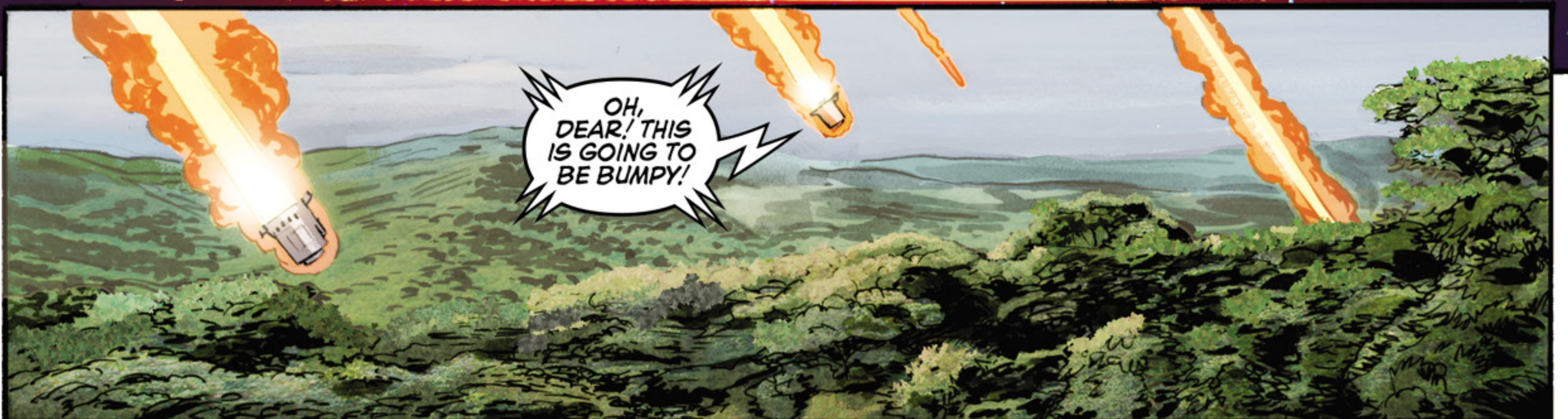
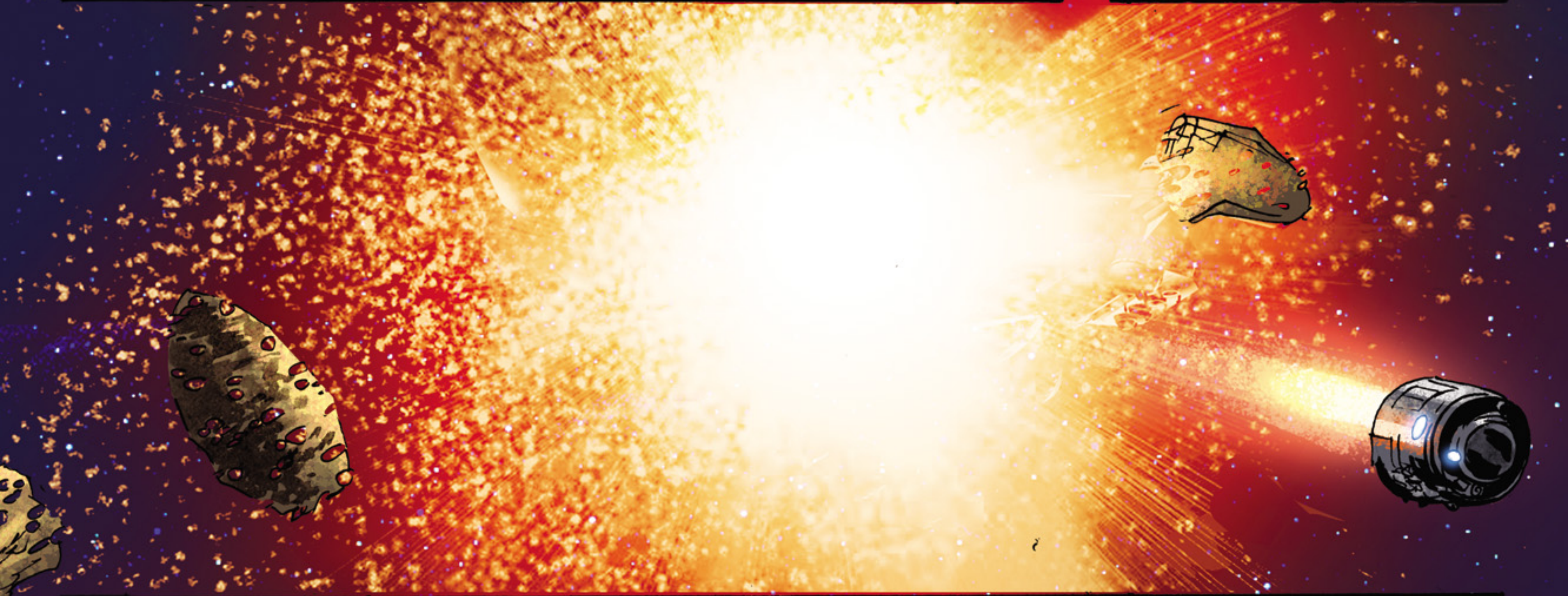
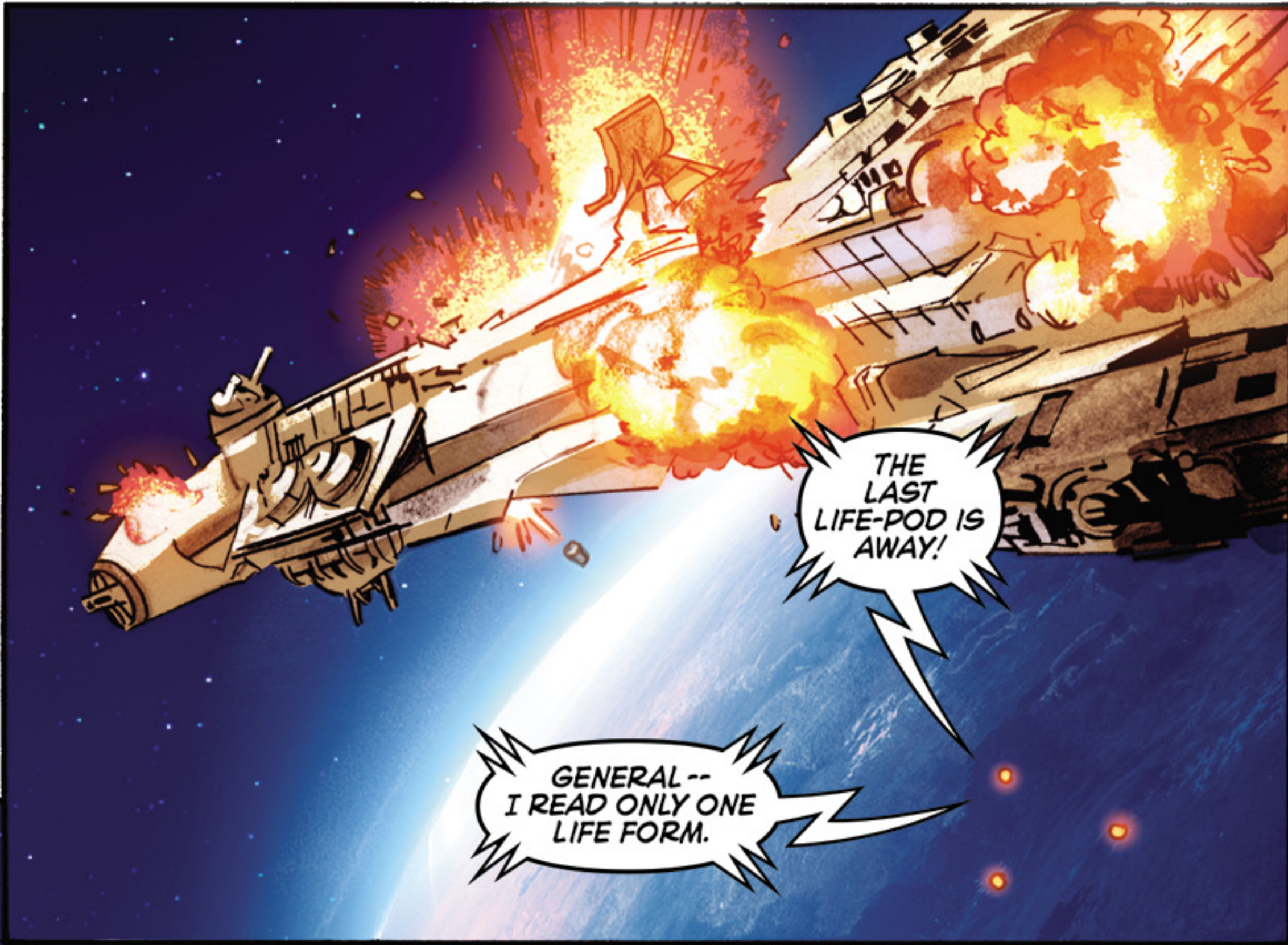


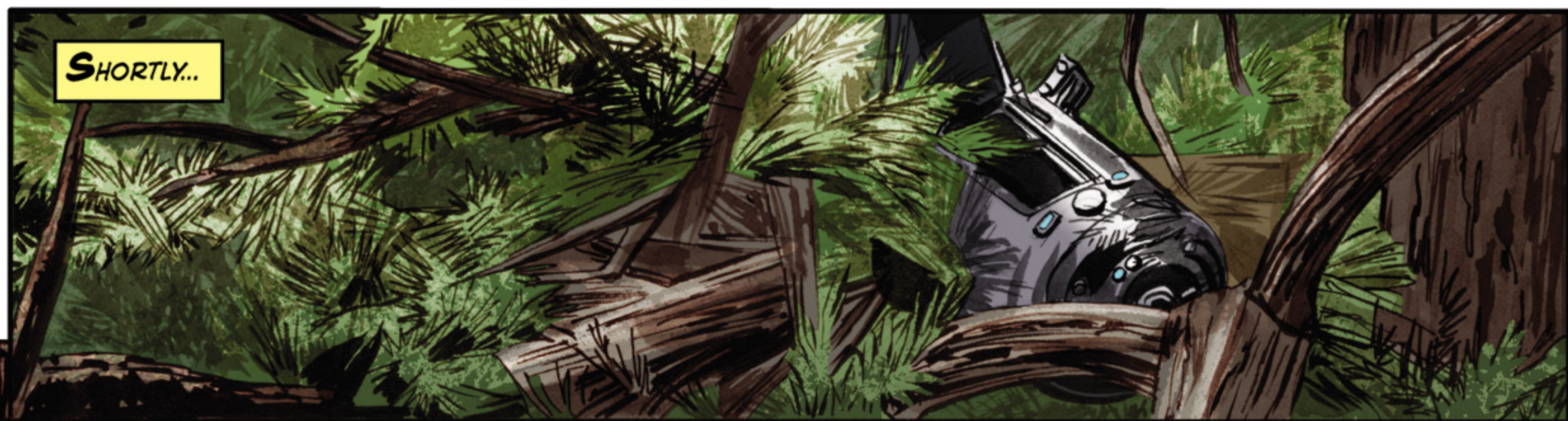
THE
MAIN LINE
IS CUT.



THERE'S
ONLY ONE
SOLUTION!

BUT--!





SHORTLY...



ANY
SIGNAL FROM
THE PRINCESS?
WHAT ABOUT
ANNIKIN?

NOTHING.
I THINK THE
OTHERS LANDED
FARTHER
SOUTH.

HMM.



THIS IS
DANGEROUS
COUNTRY. ANNIKIN
WILL HAVE TO
FIND LEIA -- AND
QUICK.



THE WILDLIFE
IN THE FORBIDDEN
SYSTEM IS EXTREMELY
HOSTILE. PERHAPS
WE SHOULD SEEK
SHELTER?



WHAT
HAPPENED
TO CAPTAIN
WHITSUN?

HE SACRIFICED
HIMSELF TO SAVE THE
PRINCESS. A COURAGEOUS
ACT THAT I WILL NEVER
FORGET.

ELSEWHERE...

SSSS!

UHH...

PSSSHHH!

WATCH
OUT!

I'M
NOT DEAD
YET.

SSST!

A
LITTLE
HELP?

DID
YOU SEE
WHERE LEIA'S
POD WENT?

IT
LANDED ON
THE OTHER SIDE
OF THOSE TREES,
APPROXIMATELY
EIGHT HUNDRED
METERS FROM
HERE.



WINDY DOESN'T LOOK GOOD.



WE'LL NEED MORE POWER.



TAP OFF BIGGS'S UNIT -- QUICKLY!

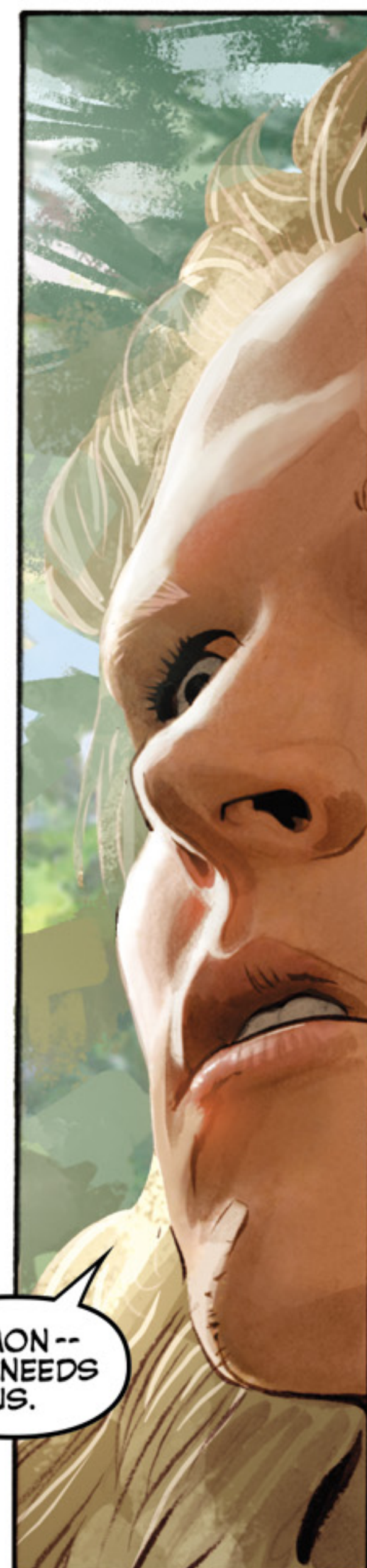
ZZZZ!



AAUCH! YUCK!



WE'LL GET BIGGS OUT OF THERE, TOO. HE SHOULDN'T BE A PROBLEM.





THERE'S
SOMETHING
AHEAD. WAIT
HERE.

IF I DON'T
RETURN BY ZERO
TWO HUNDRED, FIND
GENERAL SKYWALKER
AND COME LOOKING
FOR ME.



JOPEY
JUJUNEE,
MEEYA
BUKELEE!

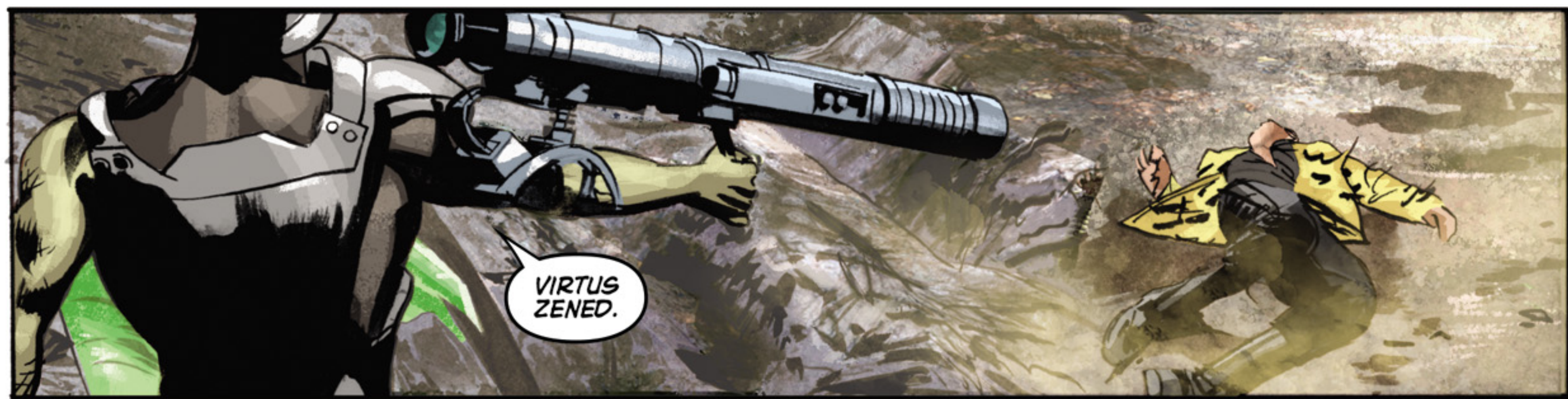


KELAI KUK
KINOP, CON
PERTAZULA.

WU YAGA
GAH AHYAG--
KALLA!

BOFANA
ZOOPEE,
PERAZOOLU!









WOOGAAHH!

WOOGAAH!

WOOGAAH!



MUAARGAAH
UR MUAARGAAH,
RAHOOUUL!



XACZHICK,
XUMAL JI,
CHEWBACCA!

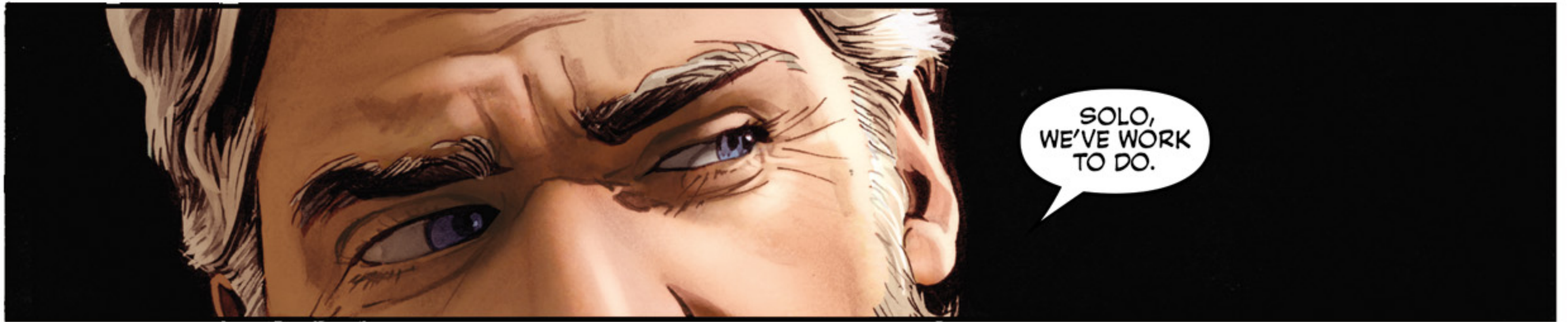
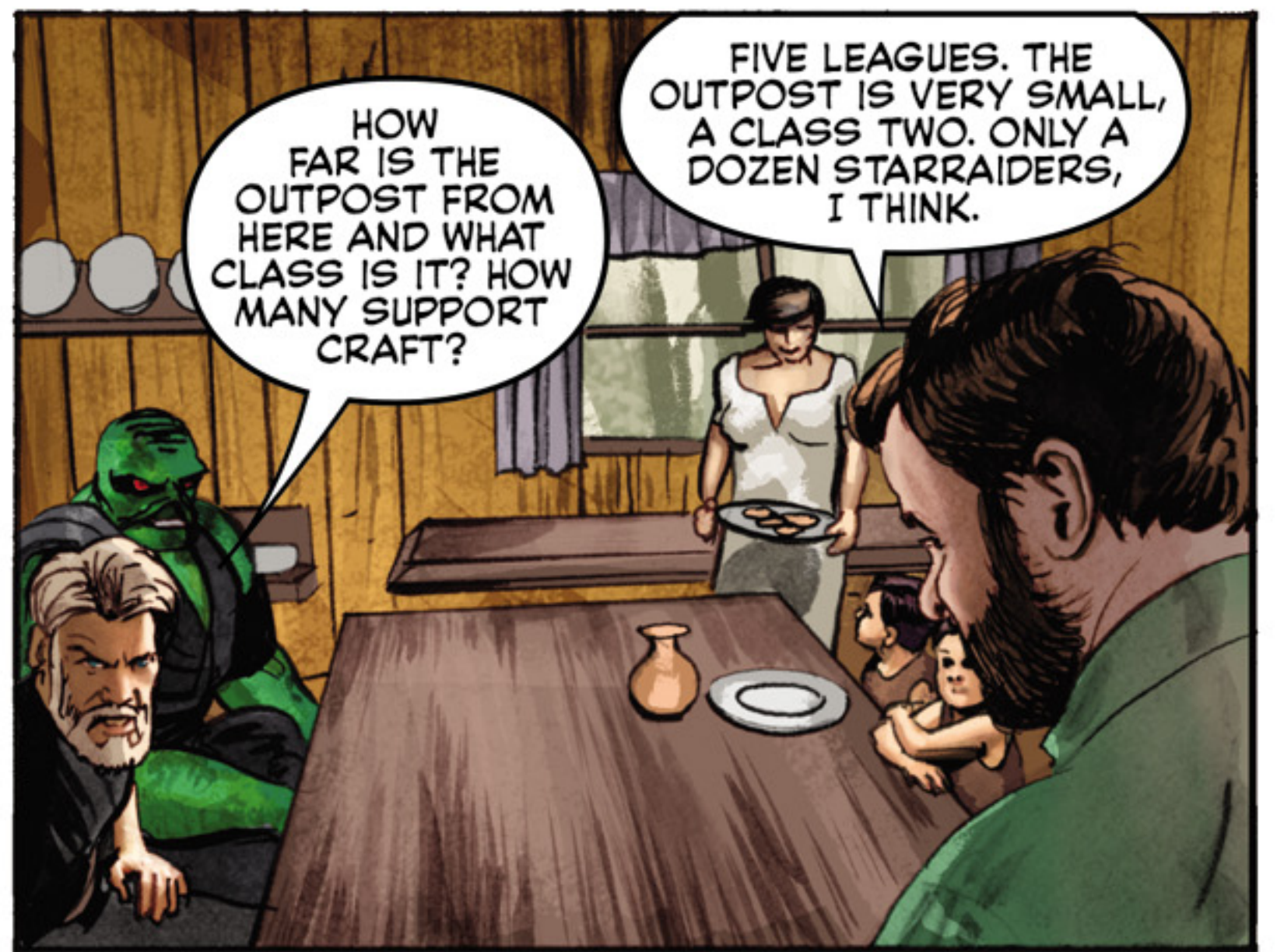
ATTI
CHIIR, ARR
GEEY.

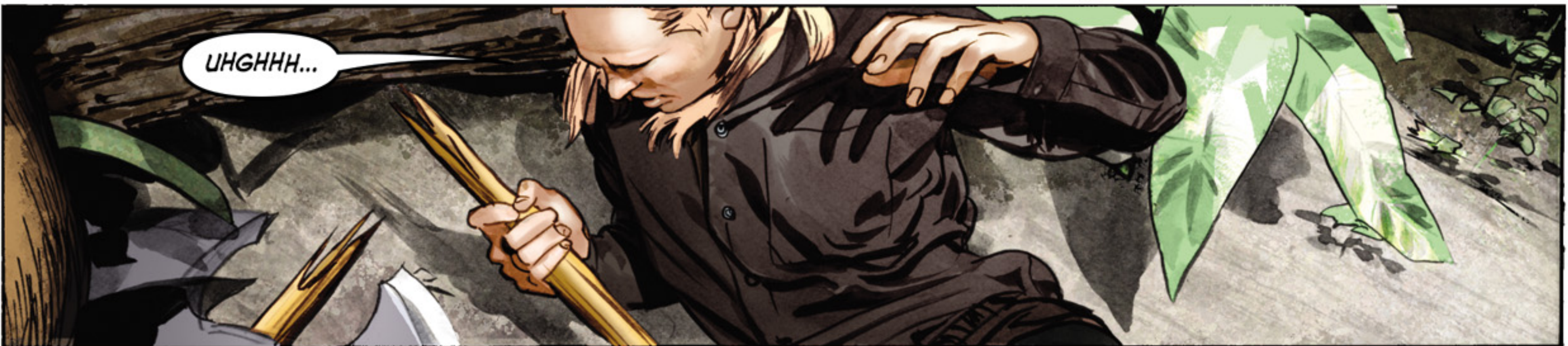
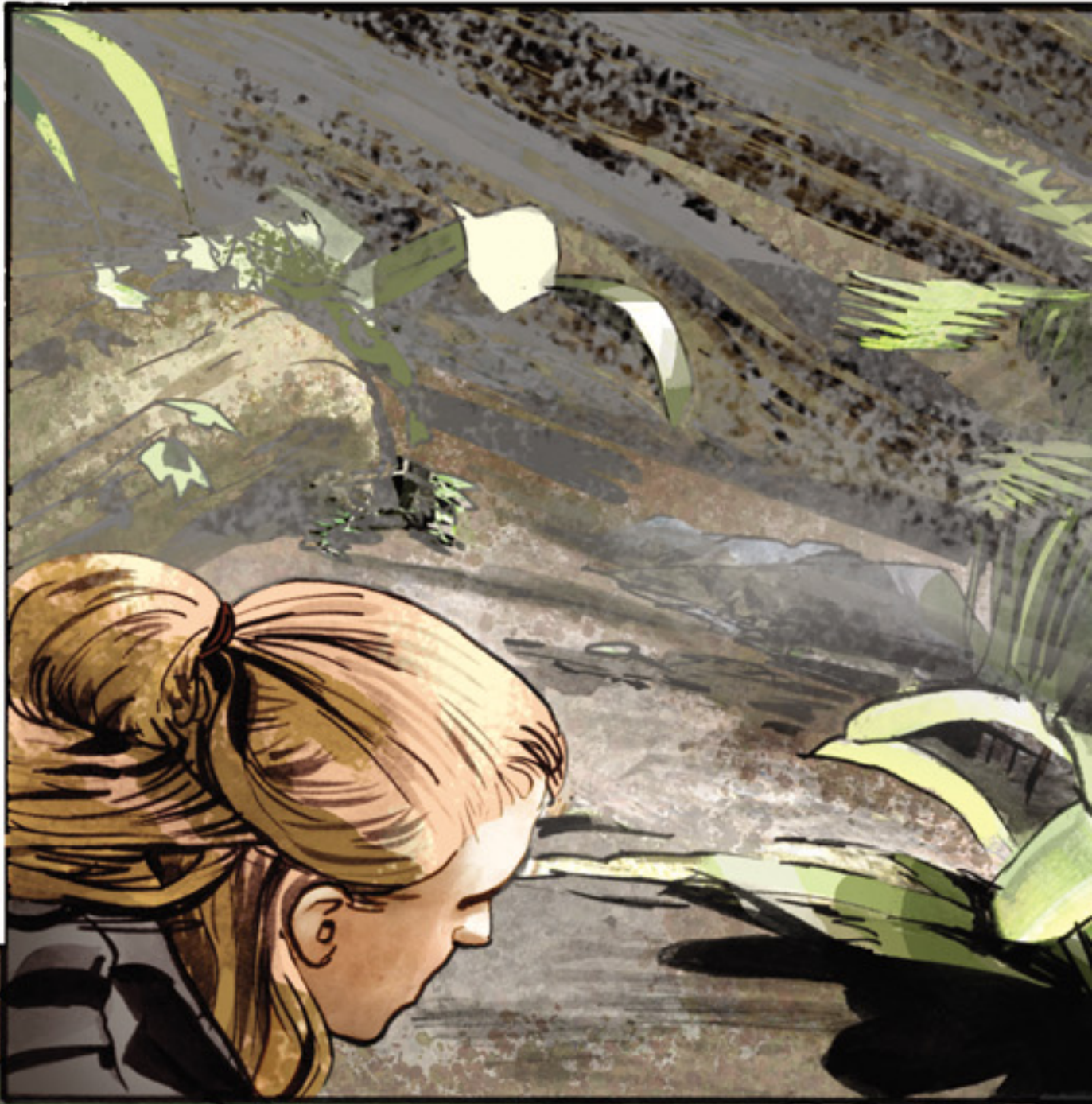


THOSE
WOOKIEES
ARE THE FIERCEST
CRITTERS I'VE
EVER RUN
ACROSS.

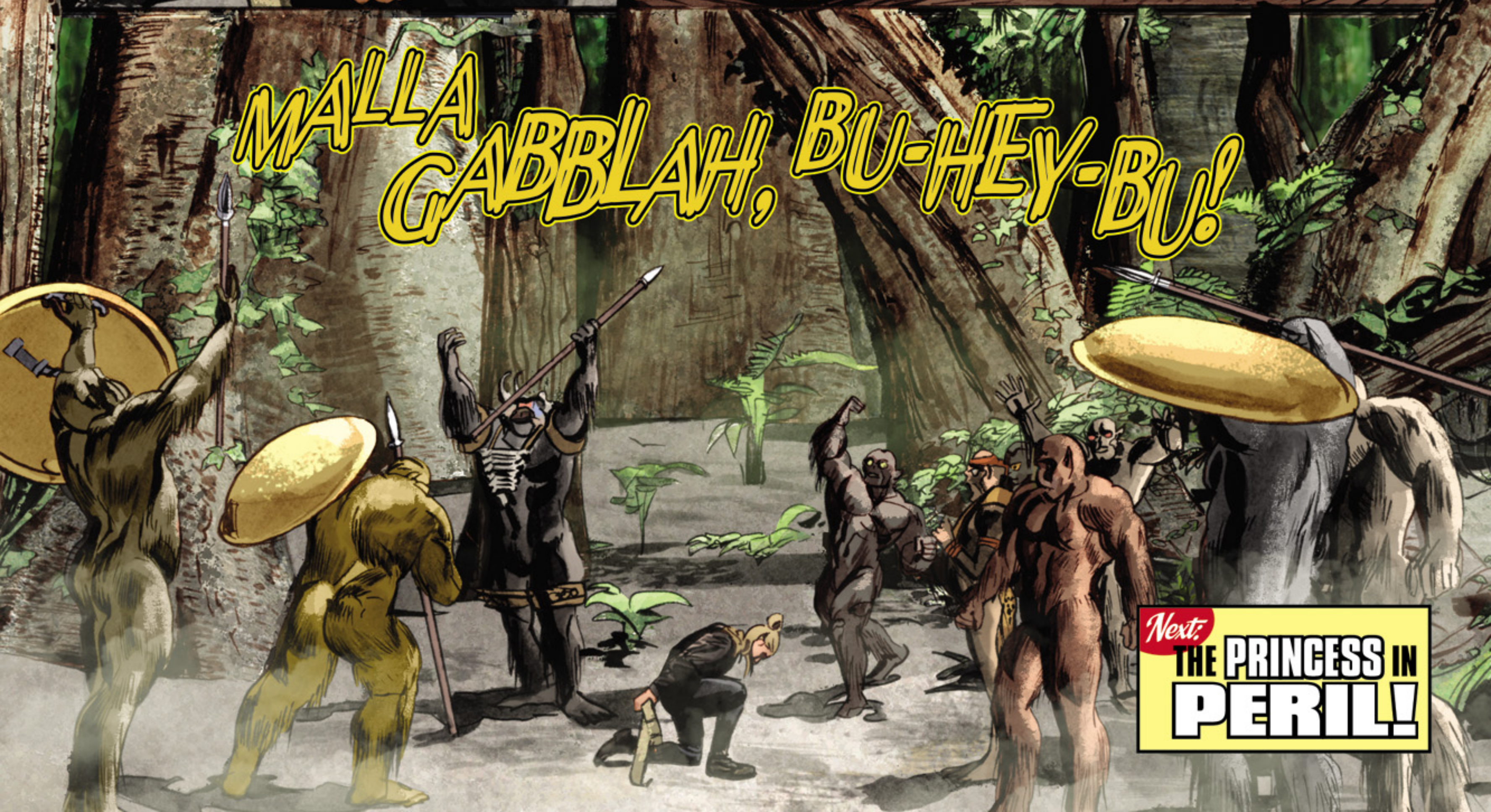
A NEW
TRIBE MOVED
IN DOWN THERE
ABOUT A YEAR
AGO -- AND IT'S
BEEN HELL EVER
SINCE.

WHERE'S
THE NEAREST
CITY?









Next:
THE PRINCESS IN PERIL!

THE STAR WARS

The Star Wars

c/o Dark Horse Comics
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Boards.DarkHorse.com

As you no doubt have heard by now, Disney, which purchased Lucasfilm in late 2012, has decided to transfer the comics license for Star Wars to Marvel in 2015. What does that mean for Dark Horse? Well, we wish we were retaining the license, of course. We feel we have done a pretty good job for Star Wars these past twenty-one years. But Dark Horse will carry on. 2013 was our best year ever, and we have some big plans for later this year. You just wait and see.

What does this mean for fans? Obviously it means our current slate of Star Wars books will be wrapping up. We still have a couple of new projects coming up, but by the end of 2014 our Star Wars output will be reduced to collecting the last of the uncollected pamphlet comics. That means you have about a year in which to complete your collections of the current trade paperbacks, hardcovers, and omnibus editions!

As for The Star Wars, whatever your tastes and budget are, we'll have something for you. After this series wraps up, there will be a basic trade paperback collection, a more extensive hardcover collection, and a deluxe oversized, three-volume boxed set for die-hard collectors. But more on that in later issues. Now to your letters:

I just read *The Star Wars* #0! It is really cool to see the process of redesigning the different characters and vehicles. The pages that were drawn by Scott Kolins are great! I can't wait to read *The Star Wars* #5!

Troy Vevasis

Thanks, Troy! Now that you've read it (and this issue), what do you think?

Thanks for printing my letter in issue #4—I was very excited to see it. And I forgot to sign it. Stupid me! Now I feel like Homer Simpson, when he tried to meet Mr. Burns but never got through to him. So now Mr. George Lucas will never know I admire his work very deeply. D'oh!

Thanks again for this great comic. I hope the trade paperback will feature a few pages from the original screenplay? That would be great. And an interview with the man himself as well. Of course I would love to see more drawings, sketches, and interviews with the artists that have been involved in *The Star Wars*.

Stefan Svik

*Pages from the original screenplay, we're told, are off limits. Sorry, Stefan. However, you can read excerpts from it in J. W. Rinzler's excellent *The Making of Star Wars*, published by Ballantine Books.*

I just wanted to thank you for another great issue in this fun series. While I am enjoying the story very much (great action sequences), it is Mike Mayhew's artwork that continues to blow me away. When this is all said and done, I hope to see him do more *Star Wars* work real soon. Keep it up!

Nick Zaromatidis

See the note at the top of this page, Nick. Sadly, there is no time for Mr. Mayhew to draw more Star Wars, but we hope to feature him on other great projects!

Randy Stradley
editor

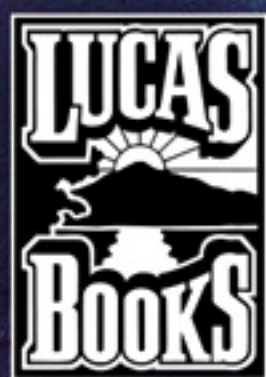
Next month:

The Wookiees join the fight!





#7 |



RINZLER
MAYHEW
BEREDO

BASED ON THE ORIGINAL ROUGH-DRAFT SCREENPLAY BY GEORGE LUCAS

THE STAR WARS

*ENTER
THE SITH!*



ADAPTED FROM THE ORIGINAL ROUGH-DRAFT SCREENPLAY BY GEORGE LUCAS

THE STAR WARS

Escaping the Imperial attack
on Aquilae, the ship carrying General Luke
Skywalker and his companions is shot down above the
jungle planet Yavin.

When their escape pods land in separate parts of the Forest of the Gargantuas,
Luke, Han Solo, and the droid Threepio decide their best course is to protect
Princess Leia's two younger brothers, trusting Luke's apprentice, Annikin Starkiller,
and plucky little Artwo to look after Leia.

But Princess Leia is captured by slave trappers and Annikin, attempting to rescue
her, is carried off by the native Wookiees! Meanwhile, General Skywalker and the
others encounter anthropologist Owen Lars, who warns them of the Empire's
presence on the planet . . .

SCRIPT
J. W. RINZLER

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COLORS
RAIN BEREDO

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MICHAEL HEISLER

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NICK RUNGE

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ROEDER, JANN MOORHEAD, AND DAVID ANDERMAN AT LUCAS LICENSING.

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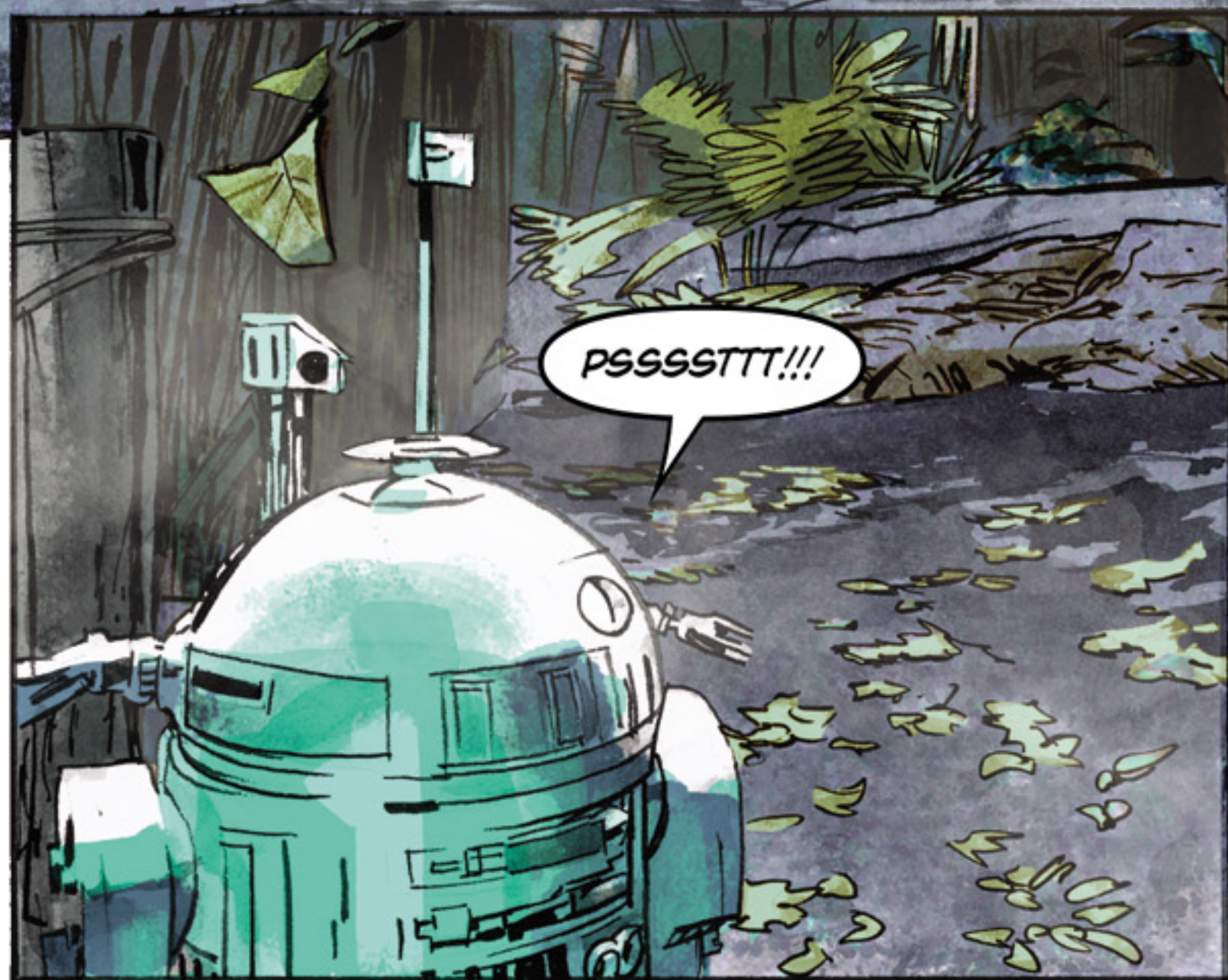


ELSEWHERE, AT THE WOOKIEE CAMP...

WAITA
TAR!

WAITA
TAR!

TAR...
TAR-SA...
WAITA!!



PSSSSTTT!!!



SHHH...
OKAY, LET'S
GO, OLD BUDDY.
BUT QUIETLY.

OH, NO!



THE
FIERCEST
WOOKIEE!

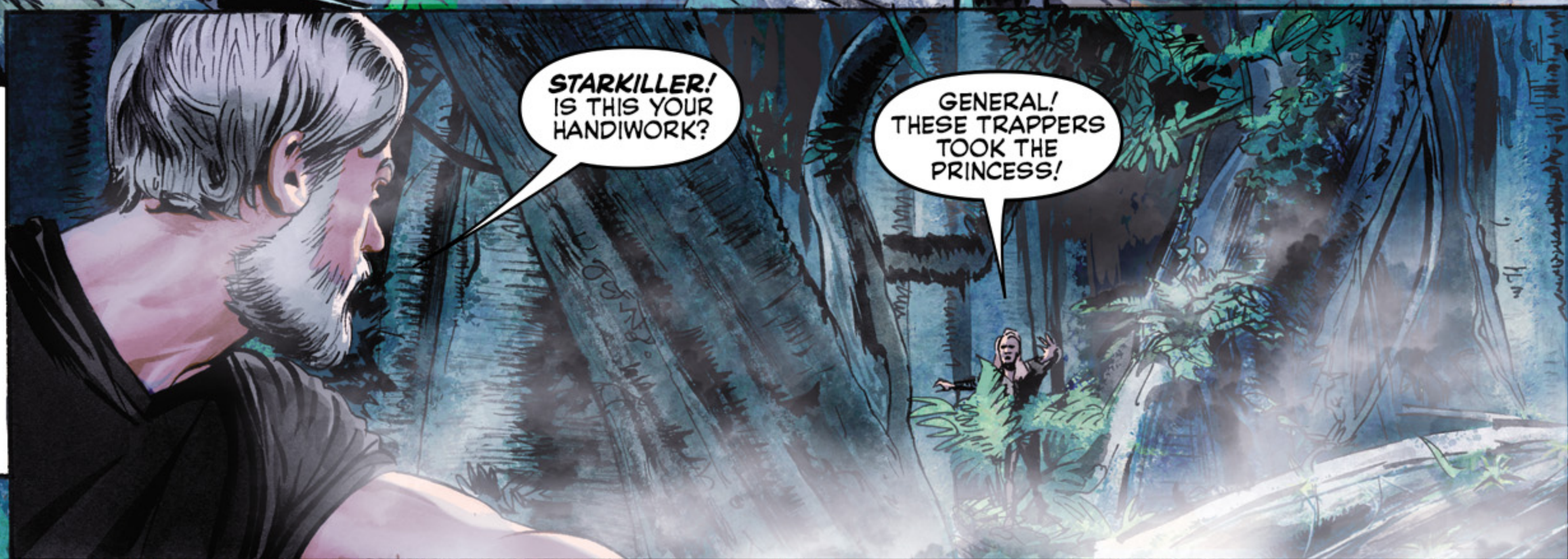






THEY
RAN INTO
SOMETHING.

IT'S
STRANGE
THEY LEFT THEIR
DEAD. THIS LOOKS
LIKE THE WORK
OF --



STARKILLER!
IS THIS YOUR
HANDIWORK?

GENERAL!
THESE TRAPPERS
TOOK THE
PRINCESS!



YOU WERE
FOLLOWED.

I KNOW.
HE WOULDN'T
STAY. HE'S ONE
OF THE ONES I
SAVED, BUT I CAN'T
UNDERSTAND
A WORD HE
SAYS.

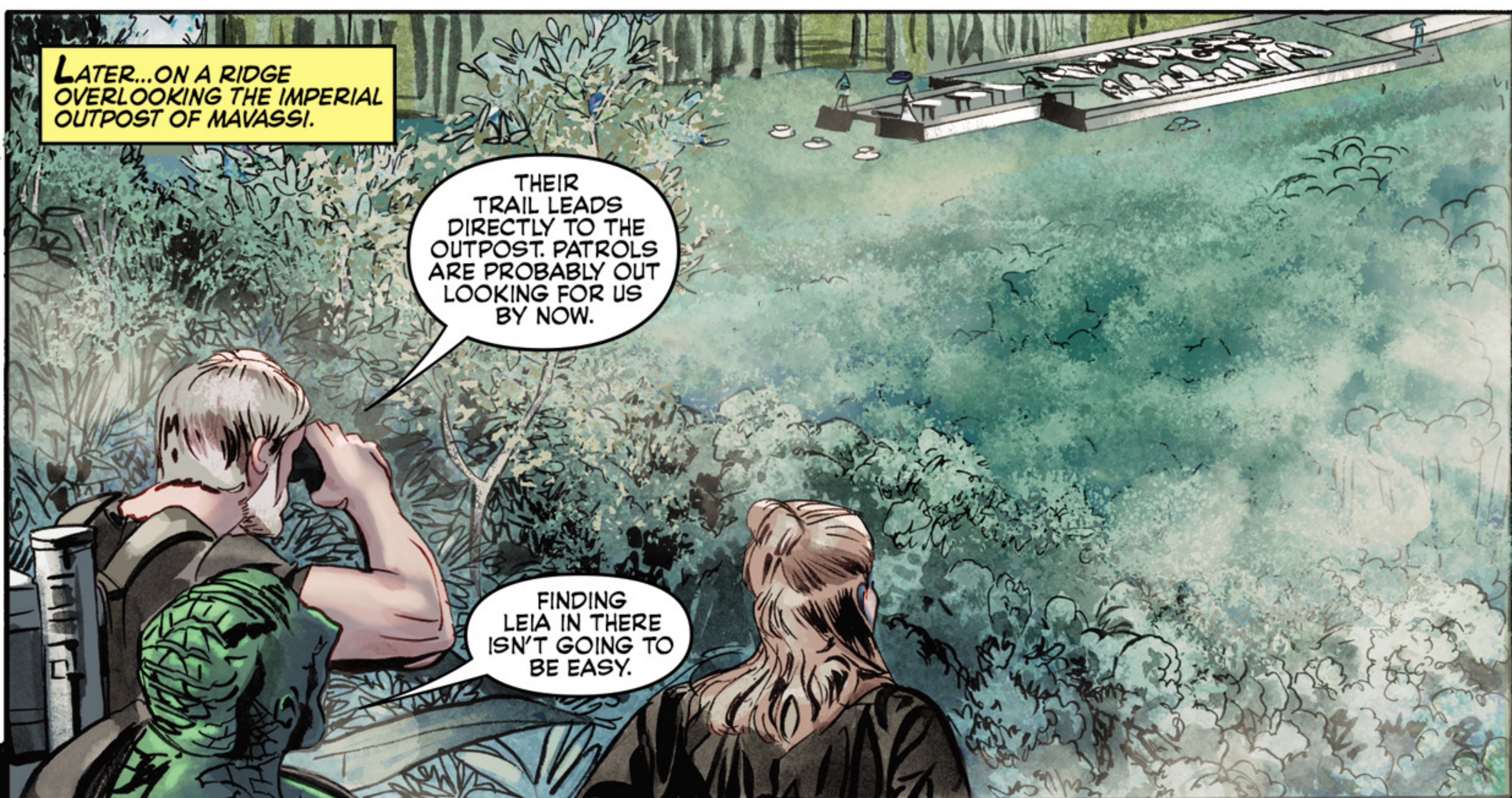


...CHEWARAGAH,
BEVAR AUZITUCKAGH,
FRO FROGARAH.
GUARAAGAAH GROZ
GROZ.

HE IS CHEWBACCA, SON
OF AUZITUCK, PRINCE OF THE
SAWAS -- A VERY POWERFUL
WOOKIEE TRIBE. IT SEEMS
THEY'VE MADE STARKILLER
A GOD.

WHA --?

GOOD
GRIEF.



LATER...ON A RIDGE
OVERLOOKING THE IMPERIAL
OUTPOST OF MAVASSI.

THEIR
TRAIL LEADS
DIRECTLY TO THE
OUTPOST. PATROLS
ARE PROBABLY OUT
LOOKING FOR US
BY NOW.

FINDING
LEIA IN THERE
ISN'T GOING TO
BE EASY.



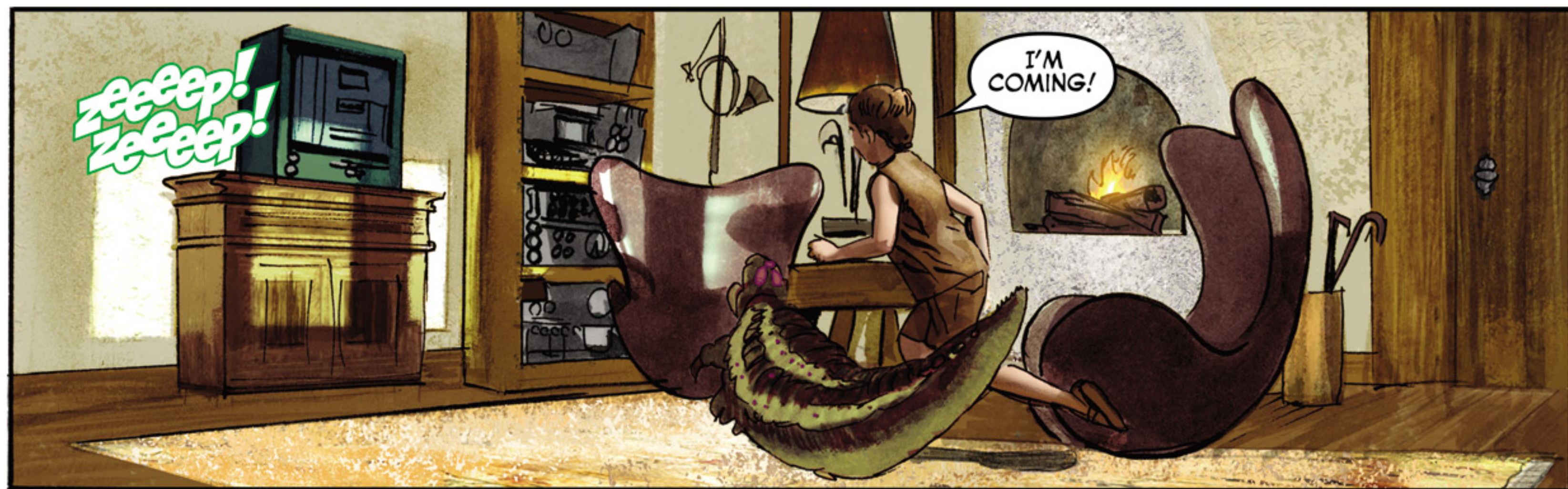
GETTING
IN THERE IS
GOING TO BE
EVEN HARDER. IT'S
A CLASS THREE
FORTRESS.



APPARENTLY,
THE WOOKIEES
HAVE BEEN
HARASSING THE
OUTPOST FOR
ALMOST TWO
YEARS.

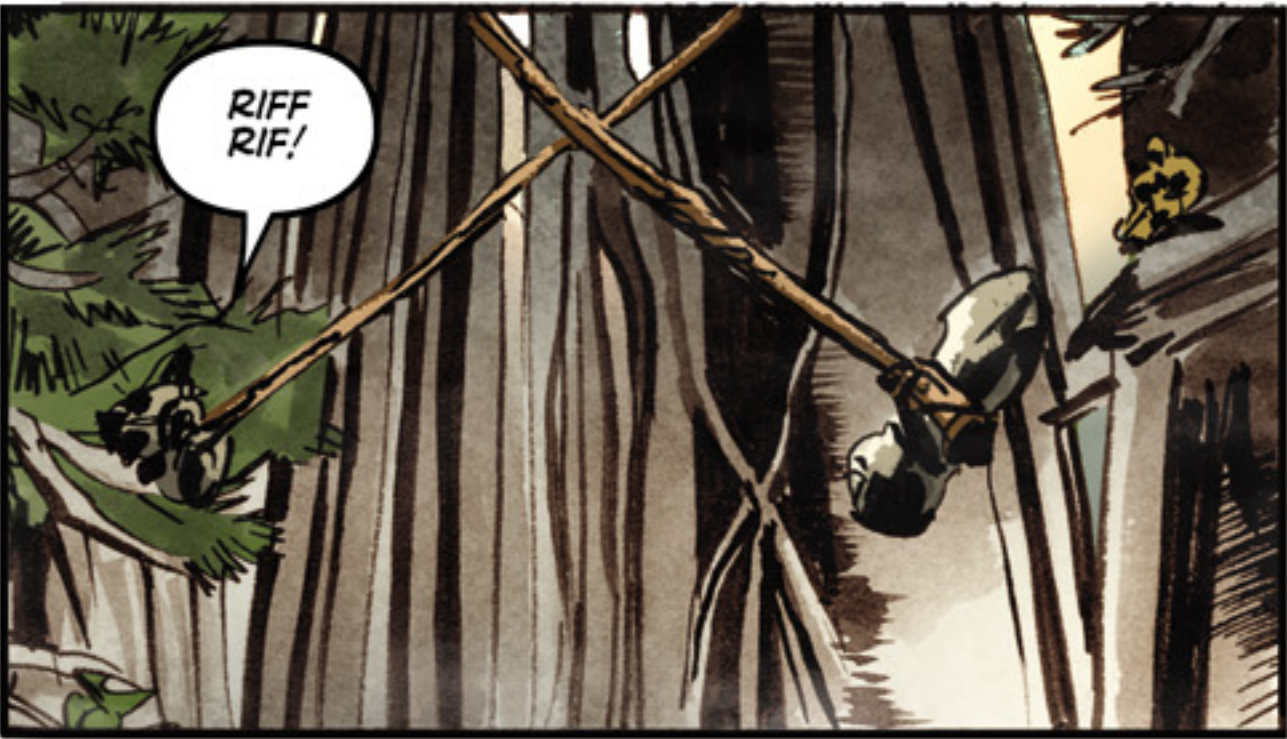
CHEWBACCA
SAYS THEY'VE
MADE SEVERAL
ASSAULTS, BUT THEY
ARE NO MATCH
FOR IMPERIAL
WEAPONS.

MAYBE
THEY JUST
NEED A LITTLE
HELP.











WHAT'S
HAPPENING
OUT THERE --
REPORT!



URK.

REPORT!
REPORT!



HERE'S YOUR
REPORT -- ONE
TANK IS OUT OF
COMMISSION!

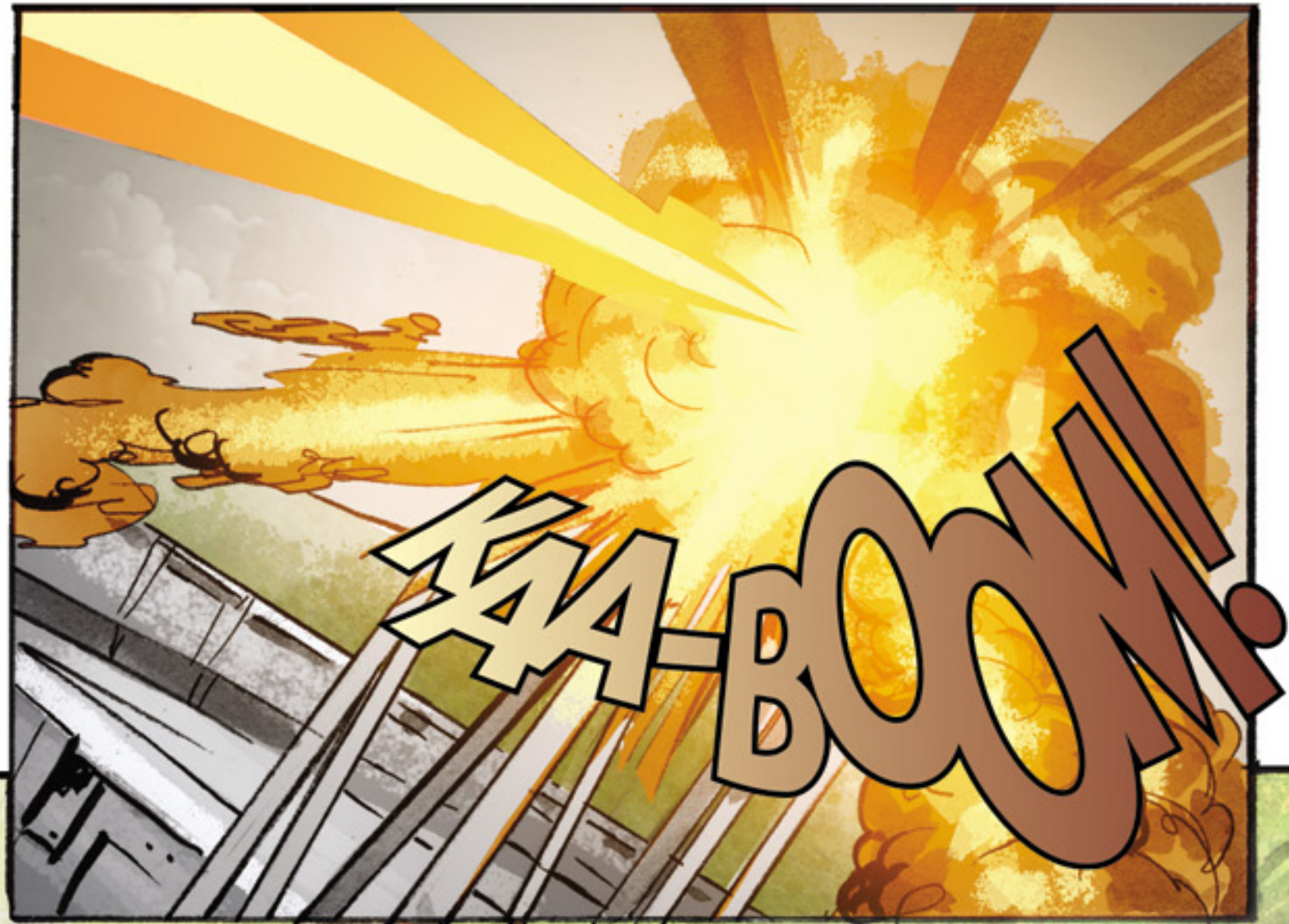


IAANNAAAAH-
RARGH!

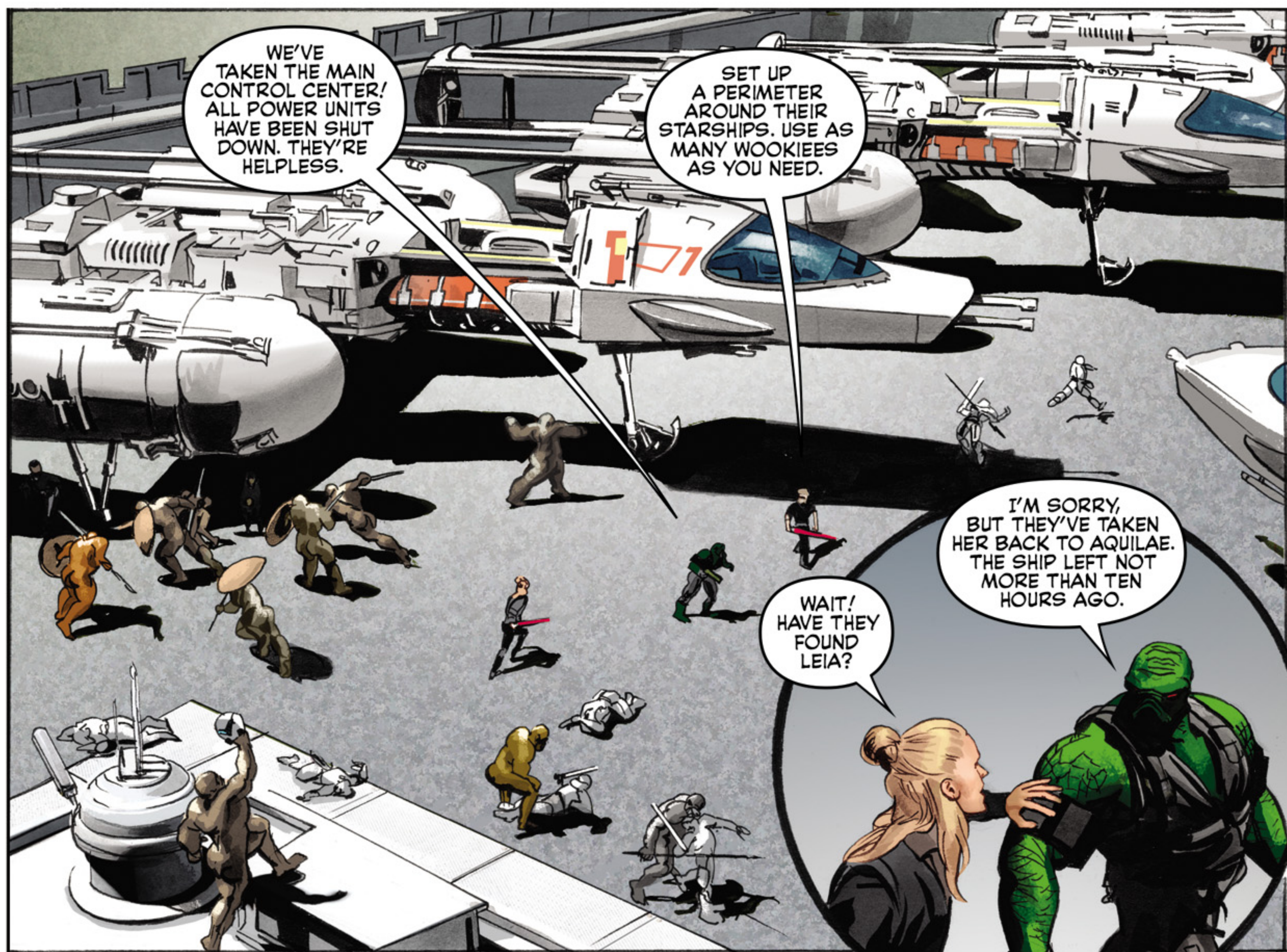


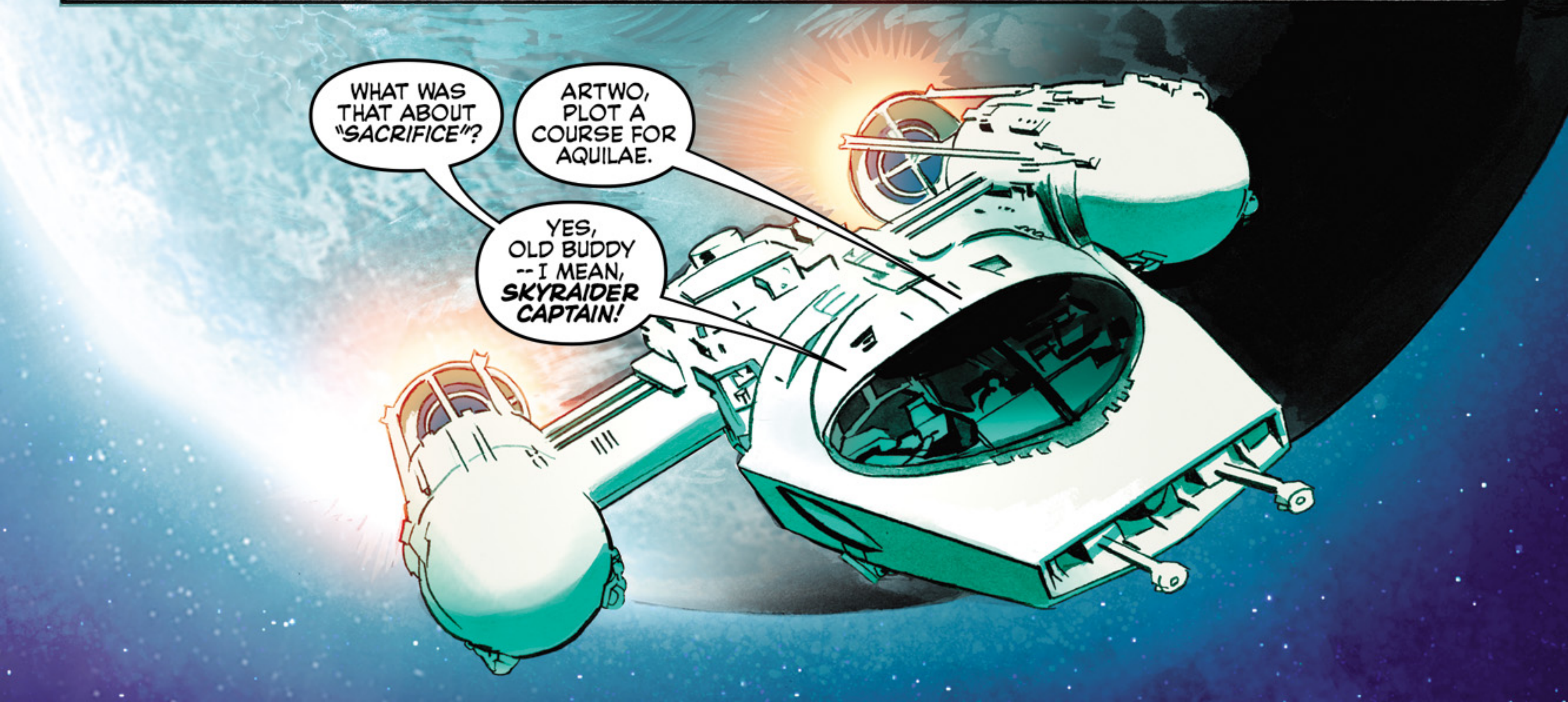
THAT
MAKES FOUR
CAPTURED.

MOVE
THEM INTO
ATTACK POSITION.
THEN WE'LL JOIN
STARKILLER.



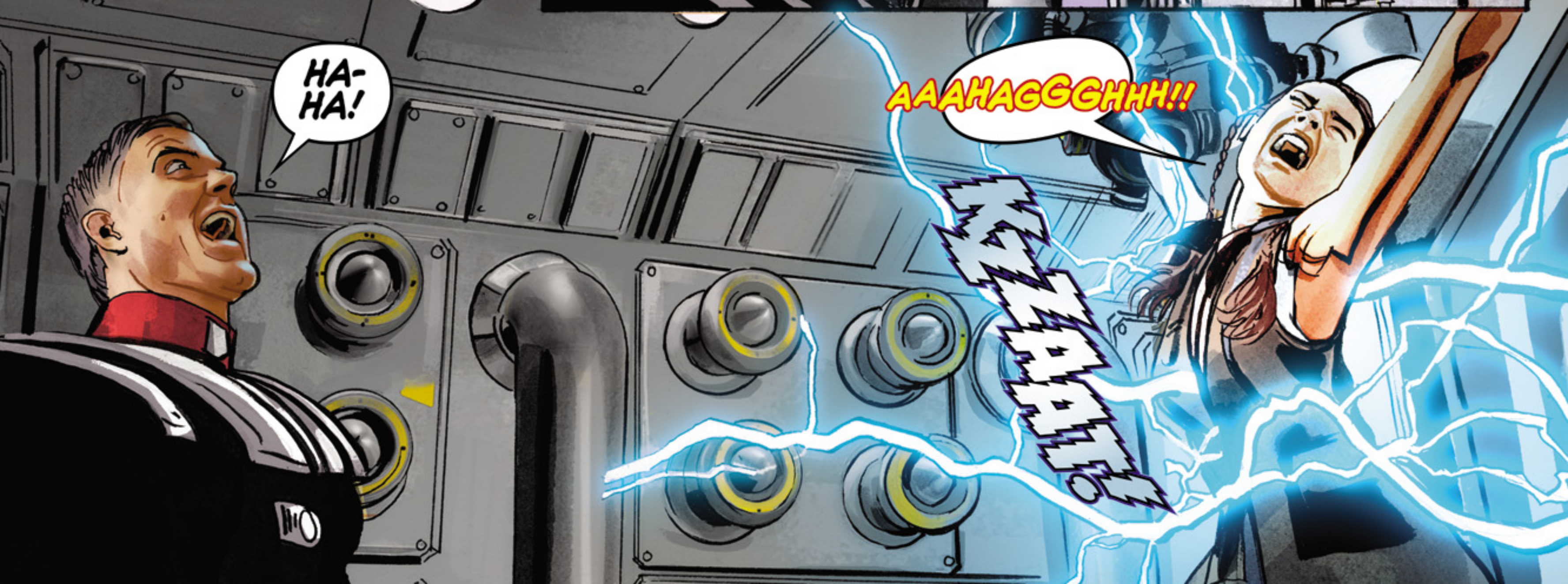


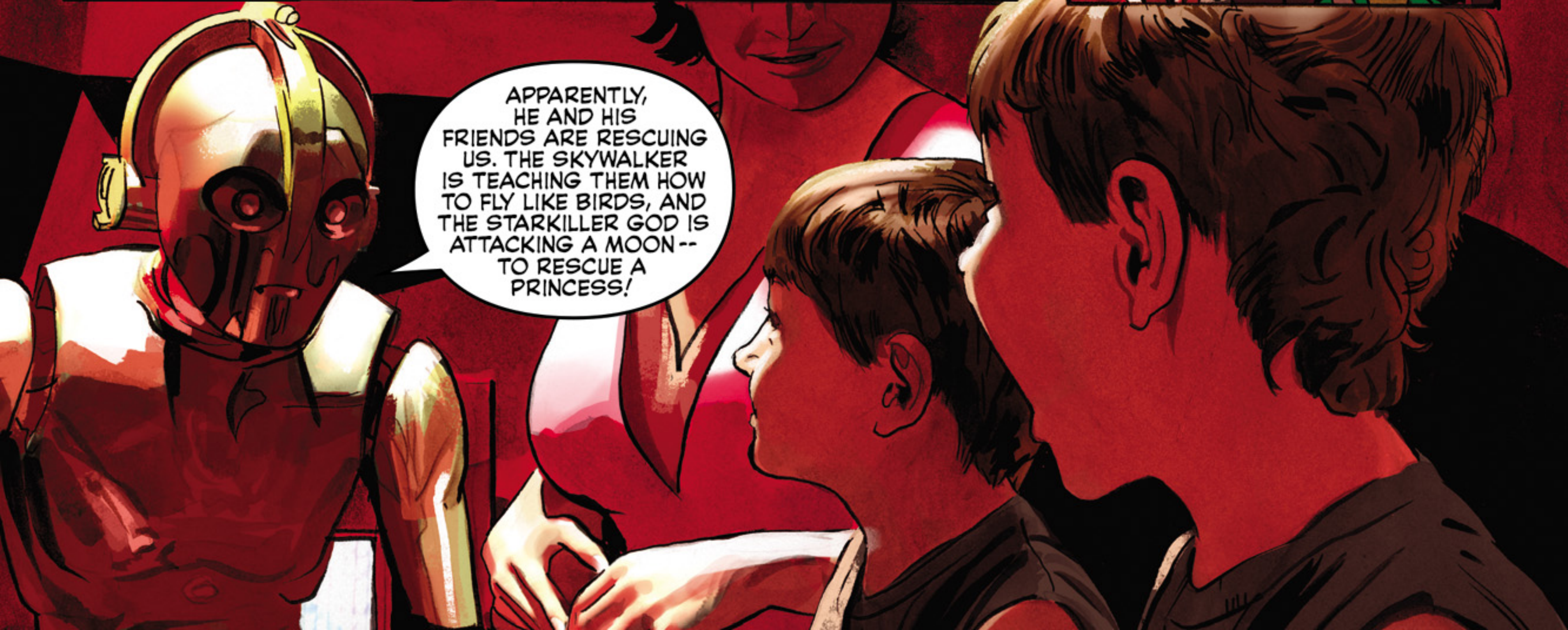
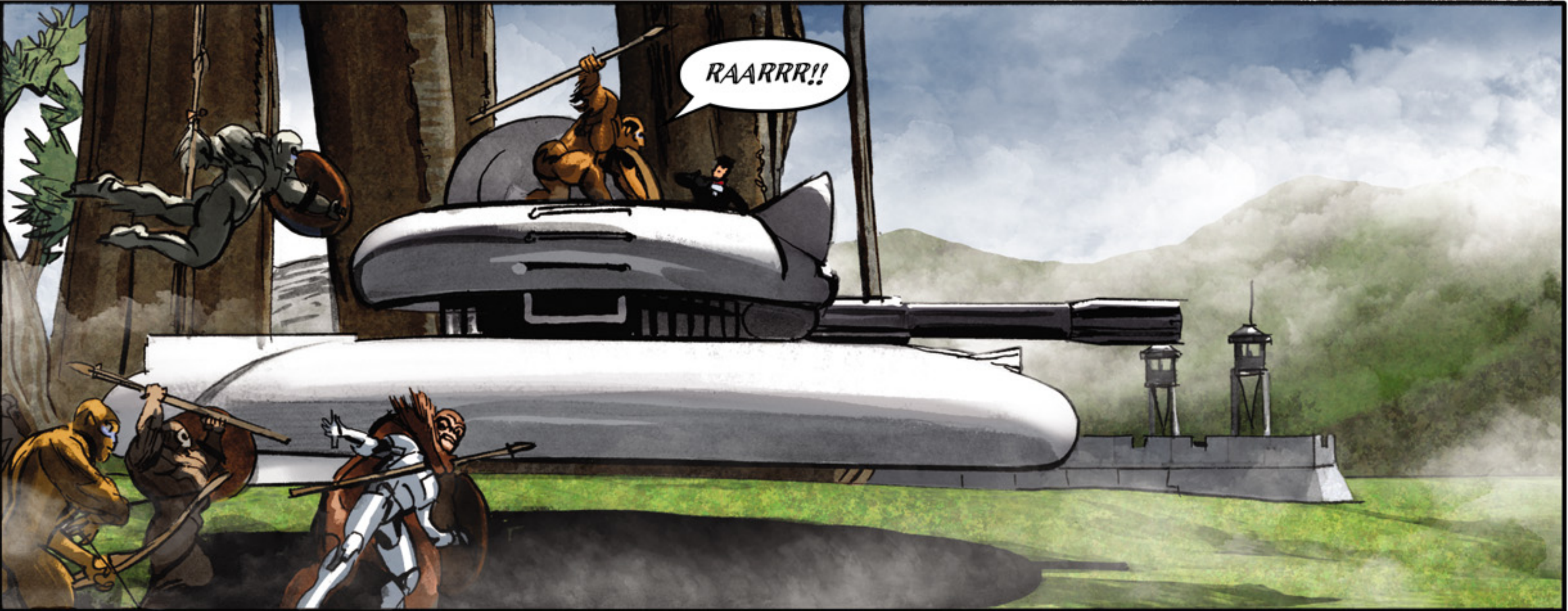


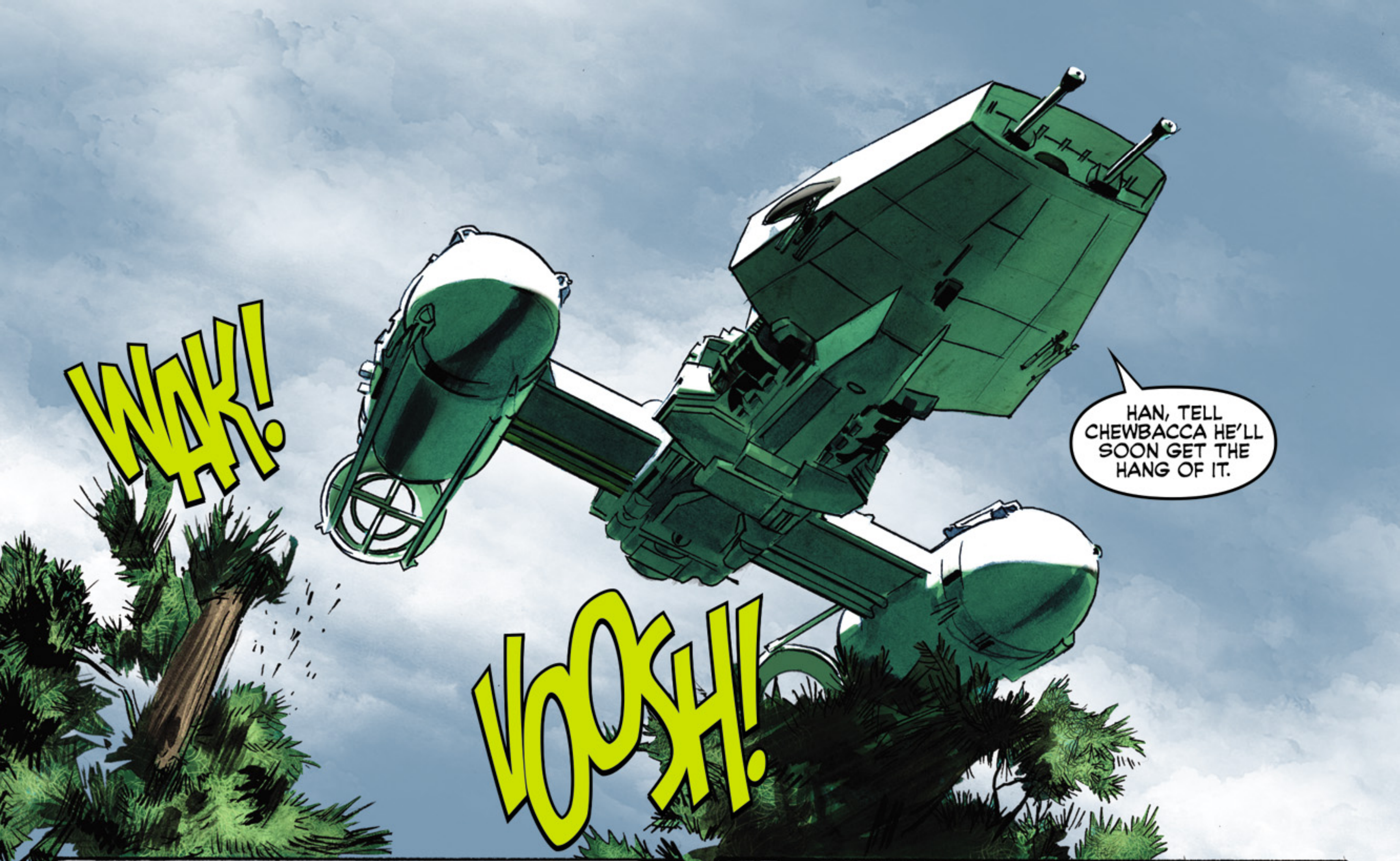


THE EMPIRE'S SPACE
FORTRESS, ABOVE
AQUILAE.









WAK!

VOOSH!

HAN, TELL CHEWBACCA HE'LL SOON GET THE HANG OF IT.



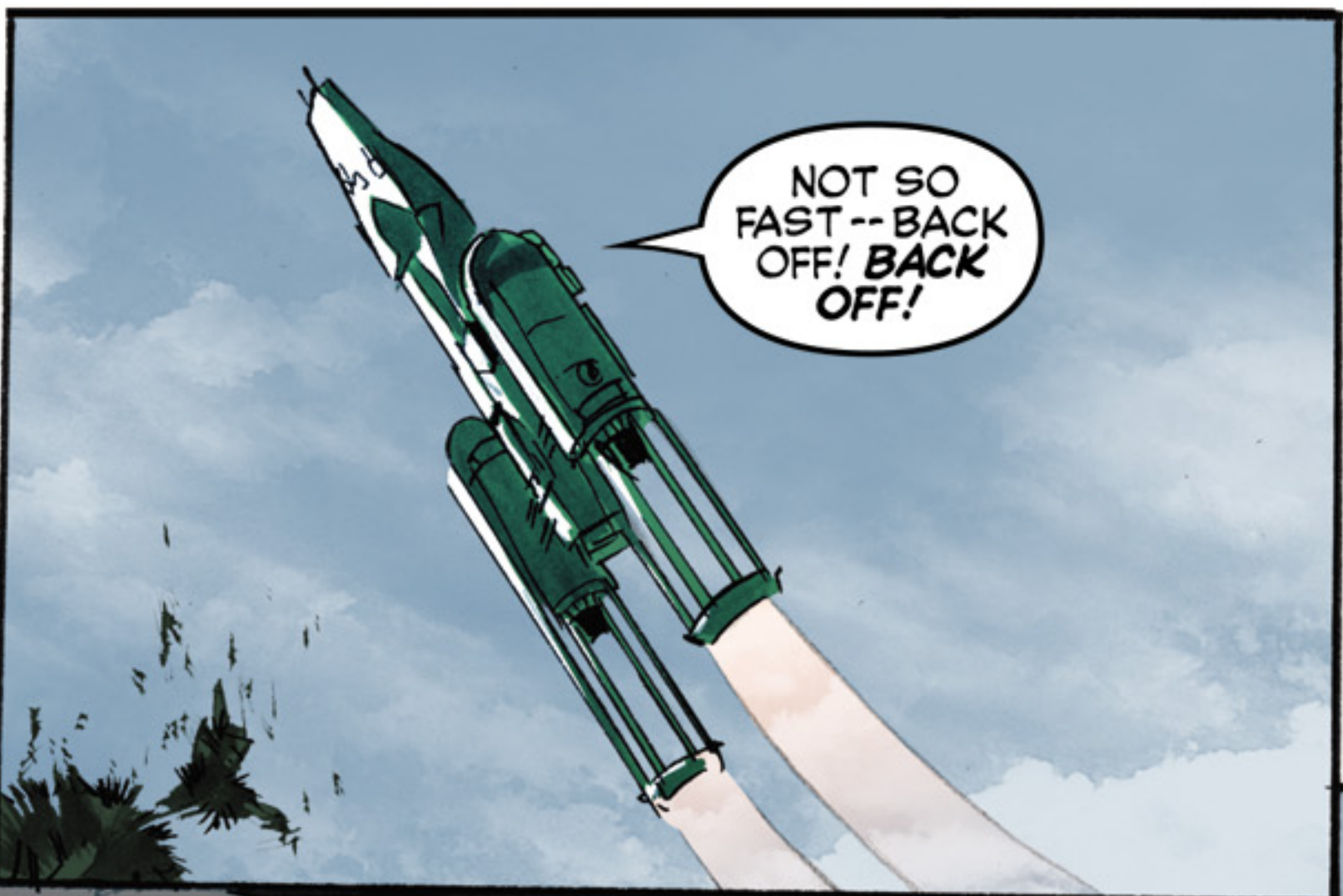
MUAWAH, MUAWAH, NO!

BURGAH!

NOW, LET'S SEE IF WE CAN GET INTO ORBIT...



WHOA!



NOT SO FAST -- BACK OFF! BACK OFF!

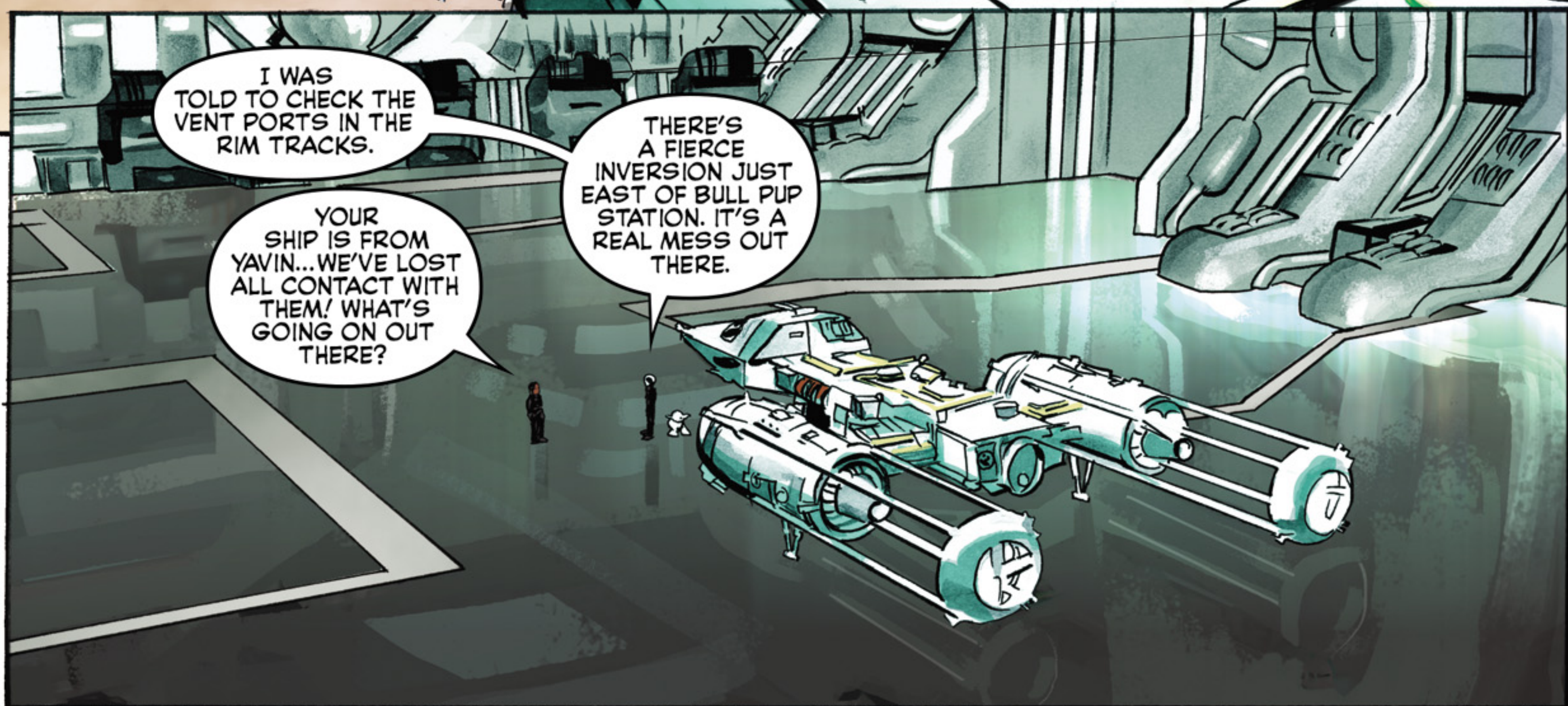


I THINK I MAY BE SICK...

THERE'S NO TIME TO BE SICK, SOLO. WE HAVE TO RACK UP A LOT MORE ORBITAL TRAINING -- TODAY!



HERE WE GO, ARTWO...



I WAS TOLD TO CHECK THE VENT PORTS IN THE RIM TRACKS.

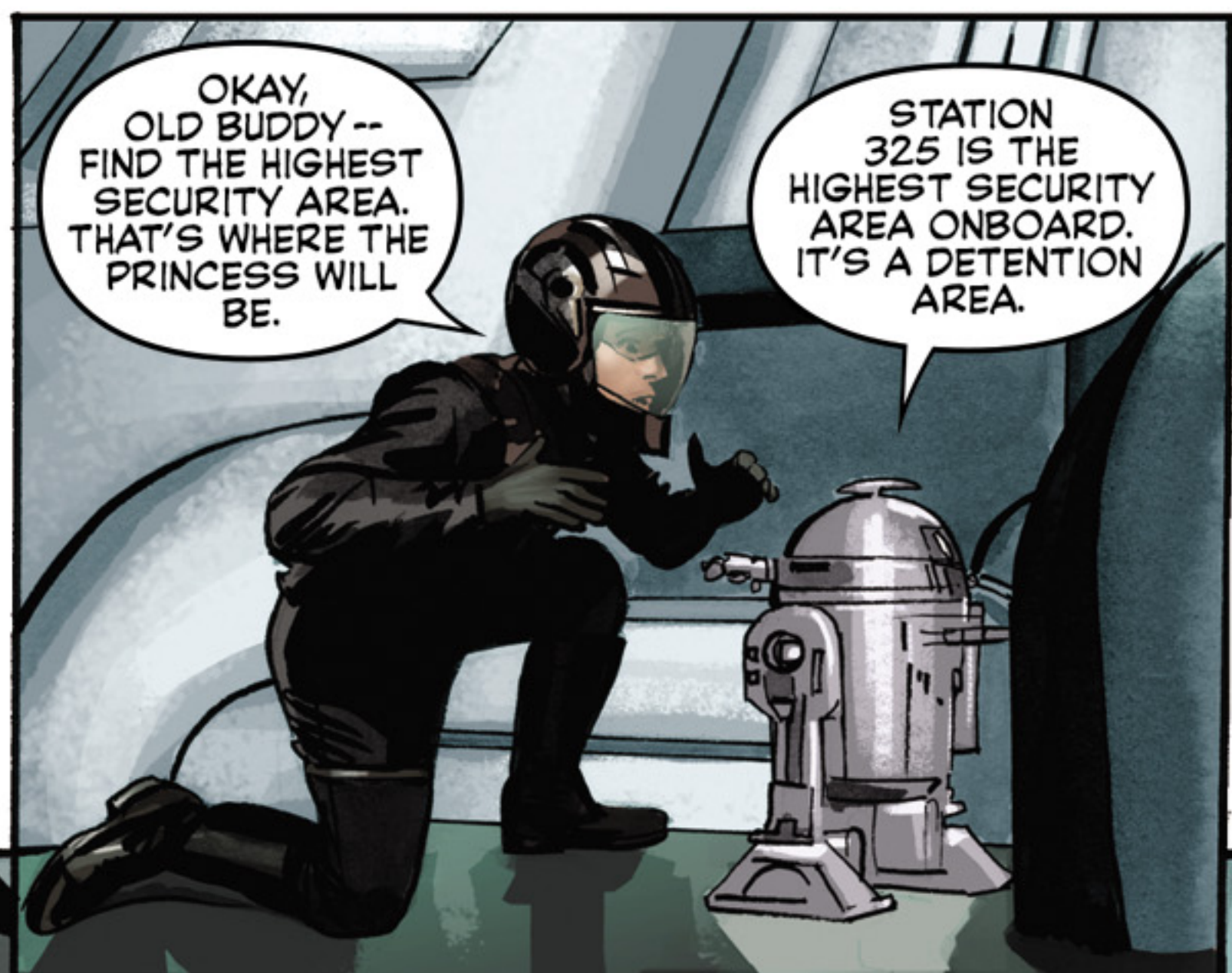
YOUR SHIP IS FROM YAVIN... WE'VE LOST ALL CONTACT WITH THEM! WHAT'S GOING ON OUT THERE?

THERE'S A FIERCE INVERSION JUST EAST OF BULL PUP STATION. IT'S A REAL MESS OUT THERE.



DO YOU MIND IF MY UNIT PLUGS IN?

NO. GO AHEAD.

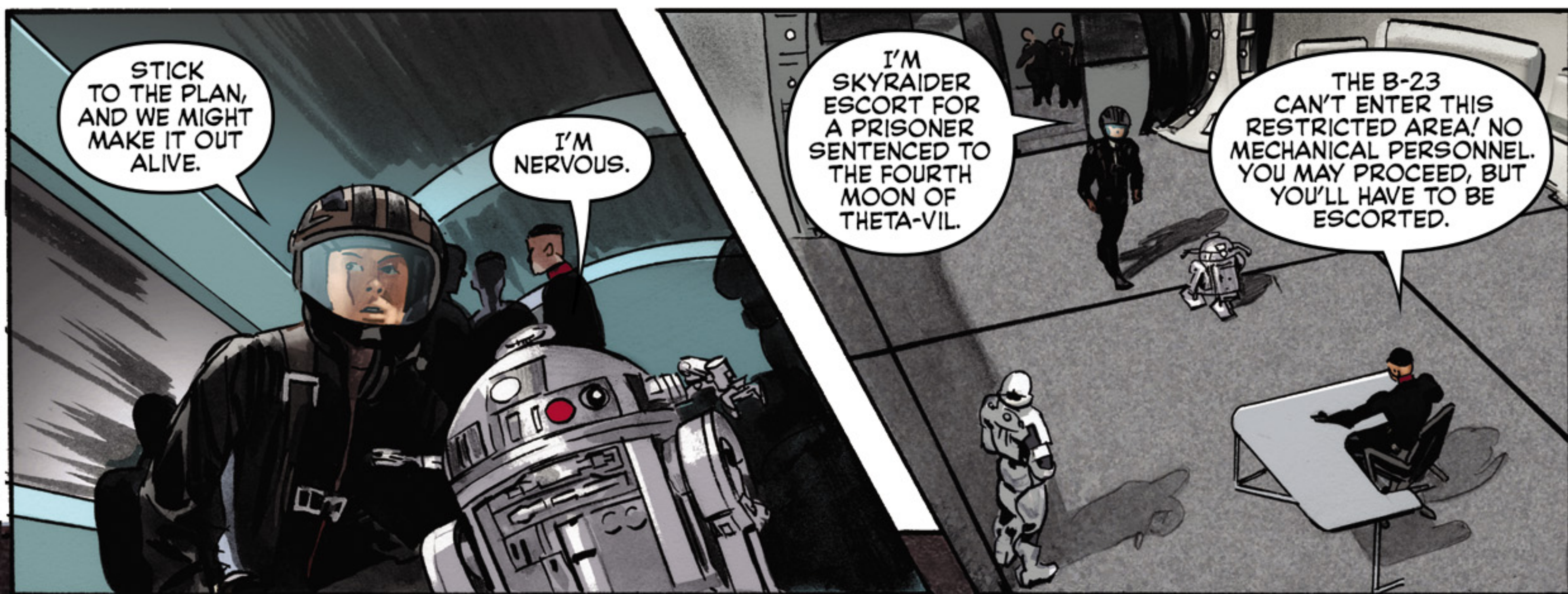


OKAY, OLD BUDDY -- FIND THE HIGHEST SECURITY AREA. THAT'S WHERE THE PRINCESS WILL BE.

STATION 325 IS THE HIGHEST SECURITY AREA ONBOARD. IT'S A DETENTION AREA.



THIS PNEUMATIC VEHICLE ROUTE SHOULD BE THE QUICKEST WAY.

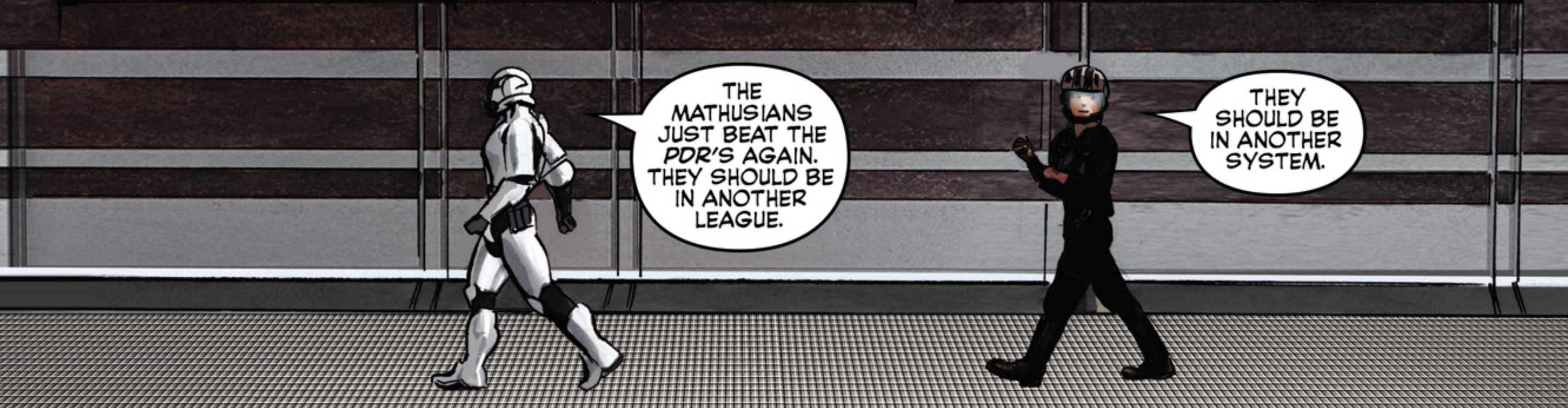


STICK TO THE PLAN, AND WE MIGHT MAKE IT OUT ALIVE.

I'M NERVOUS.

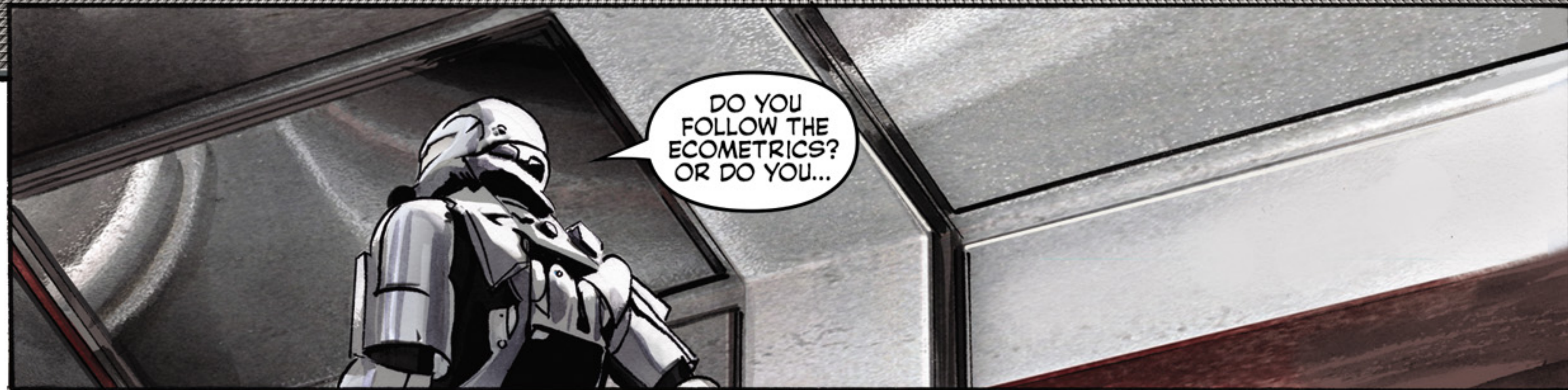
I'M SKYRAIDER ESCORT FOR A PRISONER SENTENCED TO THE FOURTH MOON OF THETA-VIL.

THE B-23 CAN'T ENTER THIS RESTRICTED AREA! NO MECHANICAL PERSONNEL. YOU MAY PROCEED, BUT YOU'LL HAVE TO BE ESCORTED.

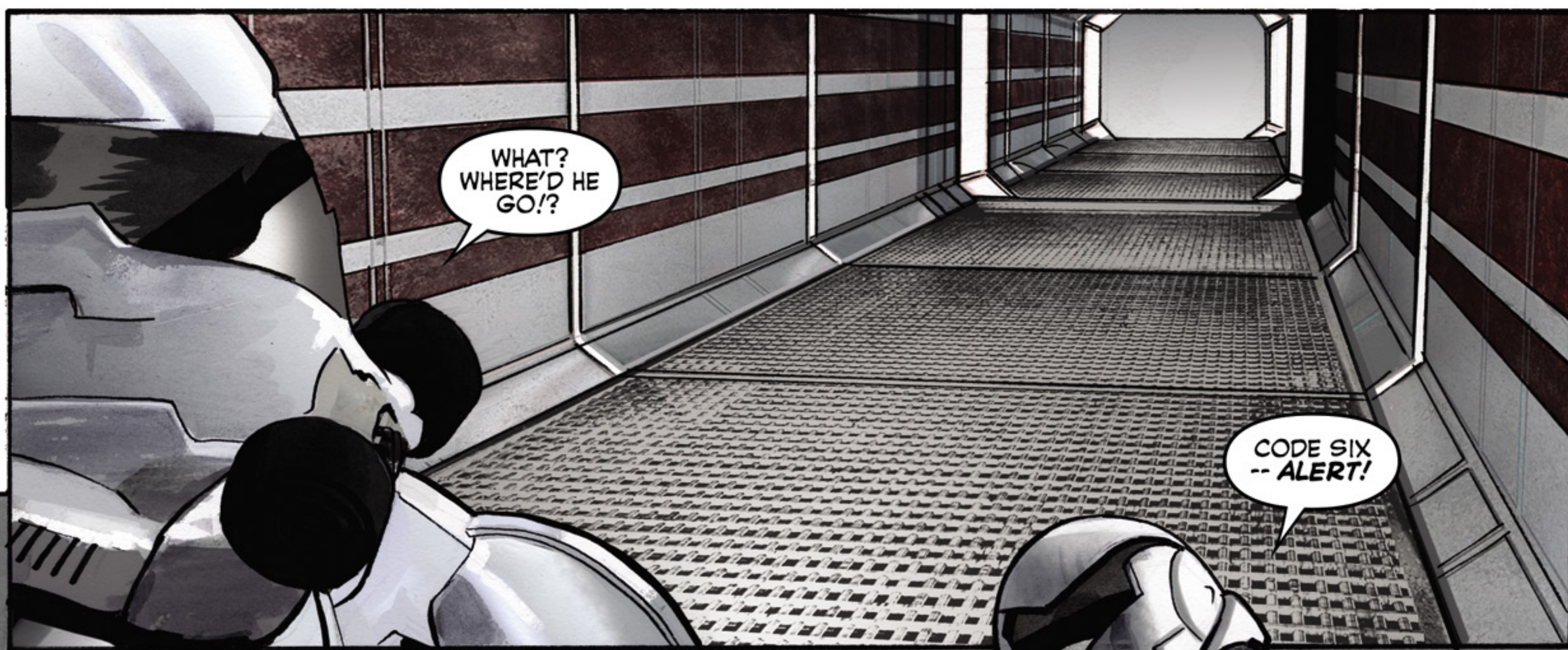


THE MATHUSIANS JUST BEAT THE PDR'S AGAIN. THEY SHOULD BE IN ANOTHER LEAGUE.

THEY SHOULD BE IN ANOTHER SYSTEM.



DO YOU FOLLOW THE ECOMETRICS? OR DO YOU...



WHAT? WHERE'D HE GO!/?

CODE SIX -- ALERT!



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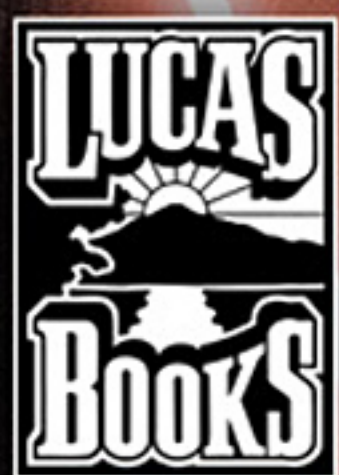


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#8



RINZLER
MAYHEW
BEREDO

BASED ON THE ORIGINAL ROUGH-DRAFT SCREENPLAY BY GEORGE LUCAS

THE STAR WARS



LAST HOPE FOR THE **GALAXY . . .**

ADAPTED FROM THE ORIGINAL ROUGH-DRAFT SCREENPLAY BY GEORGE LUCAS

THE STAR WARS

On the wild jungle planet Yavin, Princess Leia was captured by slave trappers and turned over to the Empire. Enlisting the aid of the savage Wookiees that Jedi-in-training Annikin Starkiller had befriended, Jedi General Luke Skywalker and Han Solo ambushed Imperial tanks and used them to attack the Imperials' own fort.

Determined to rescue the princess Starkiller loves, he and the droid Artwo fly an Imperial starfighter to Darth Vader's Space Fortress—while Skywalker and Solo train the Wookiee warriors in the basics of piloting starfighters. Both aspects of the plan are desperate—and dangerous.

Arriving in orbit above Aquilae, the disguised Starkiller successfully infiltrates the Space Fortress, but is soon discovered. Now, every stormtrooper on the station is on the alert, searching for him . . .

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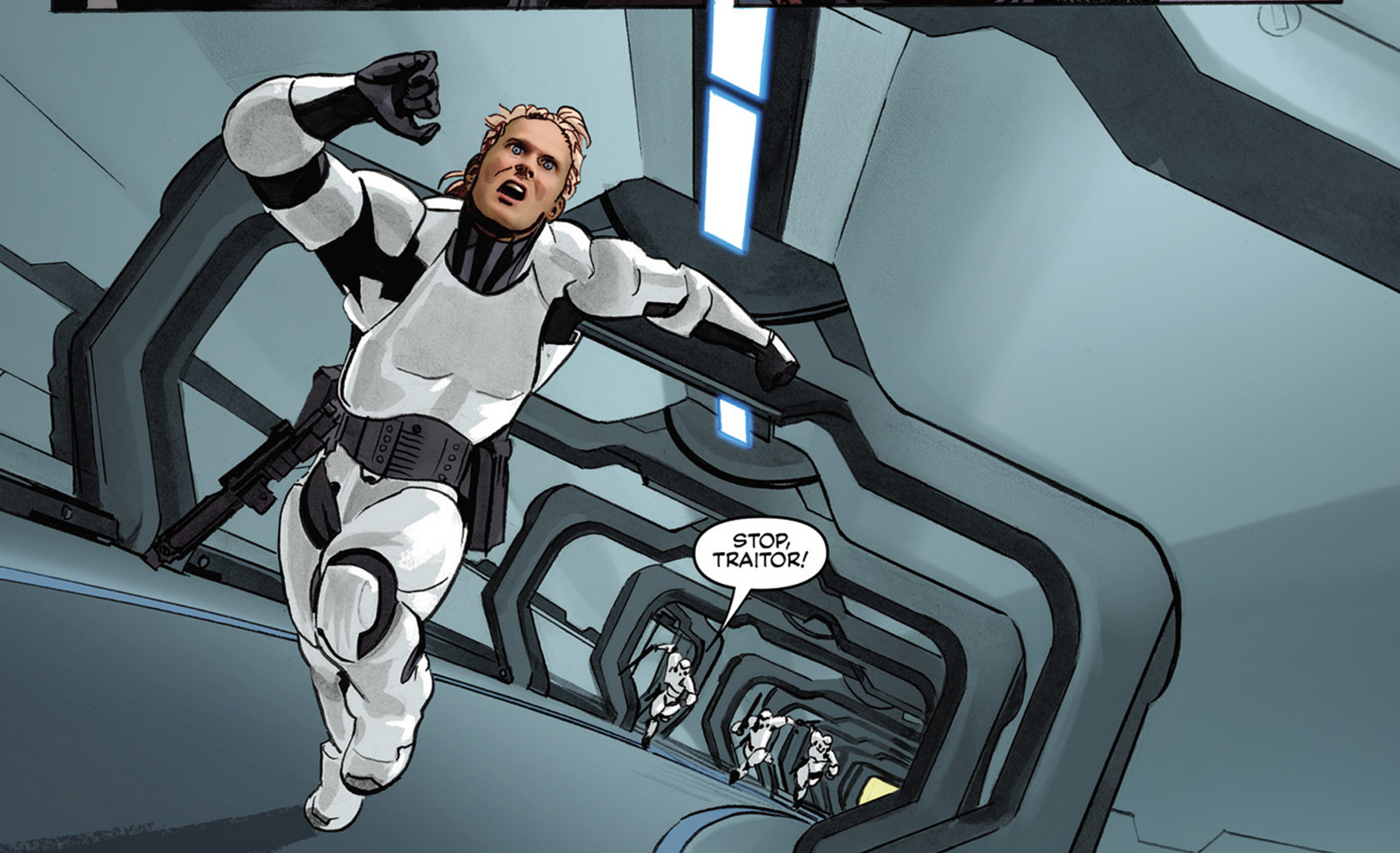
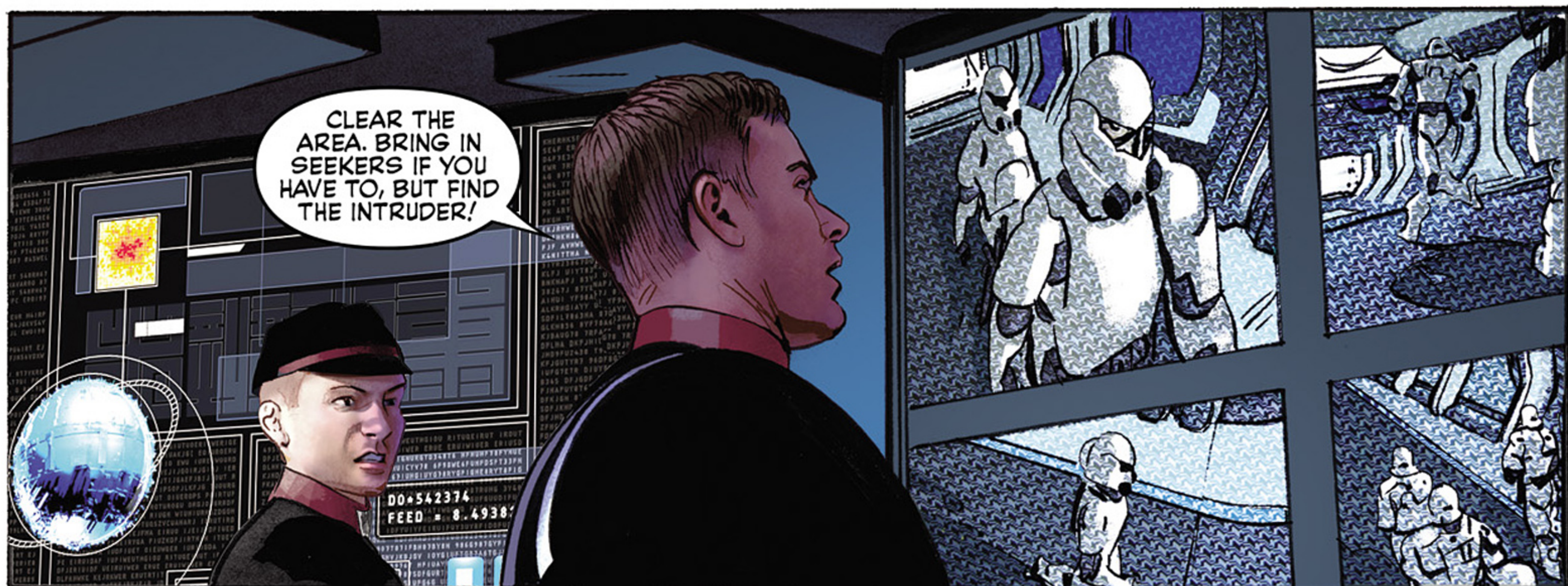
SPECIAL THANKS TO JENNIFER HEDDLE, LELAND CHEE, TROY ALDERS, CAROL ROEDER, JANN MOORHEAD, AND DAVID ANDERMAN AT LUCAS LICENSING.

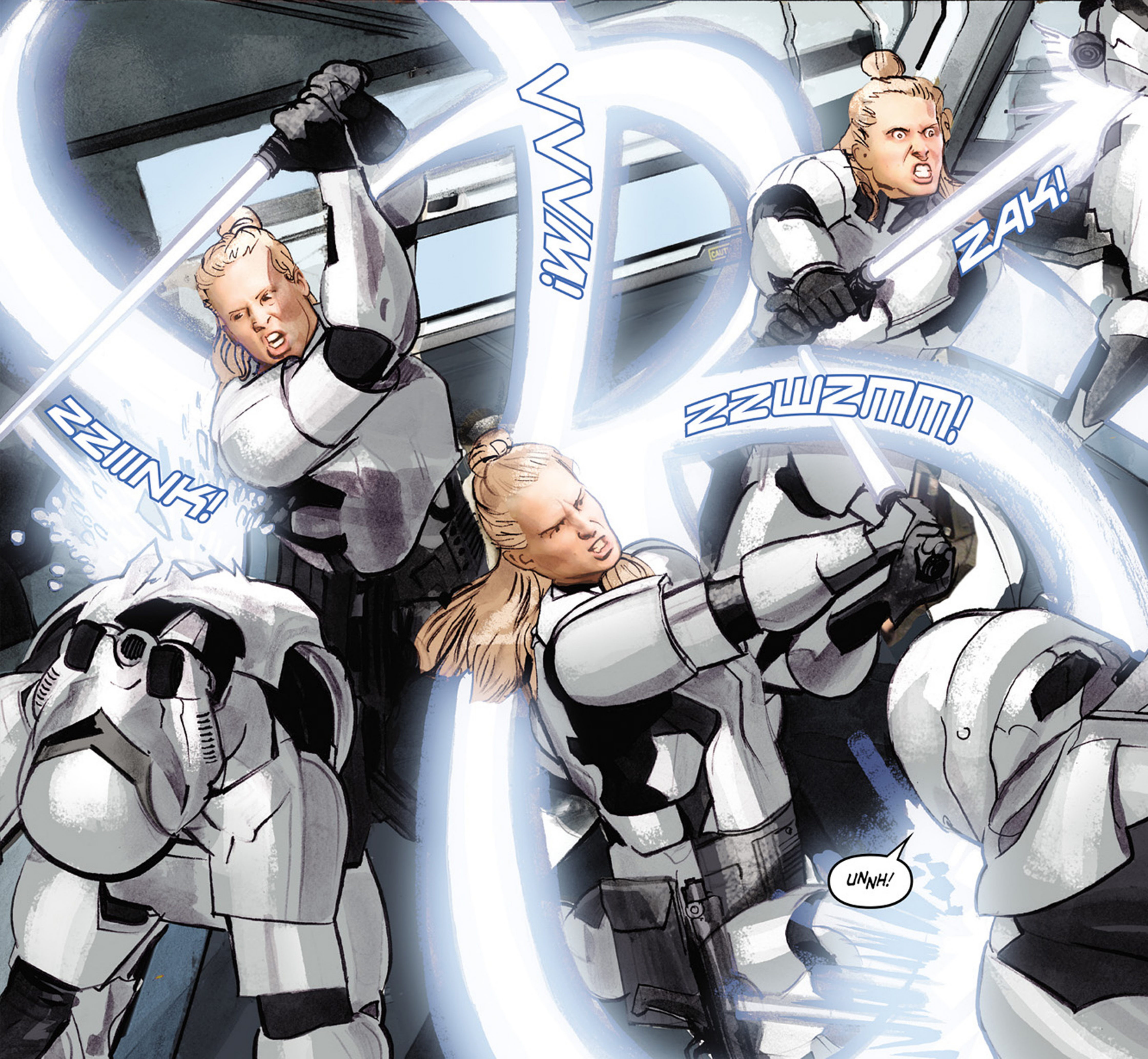
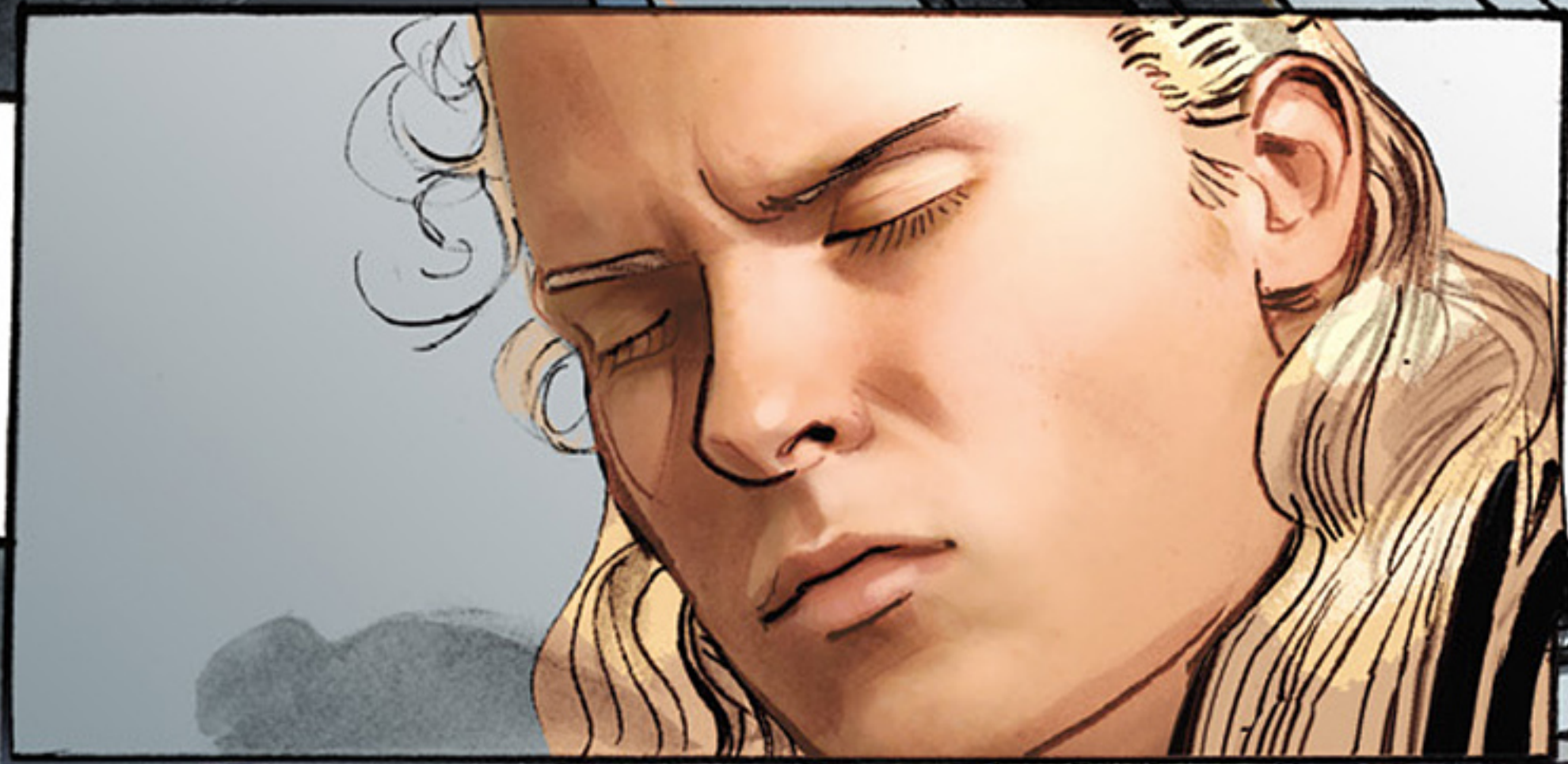
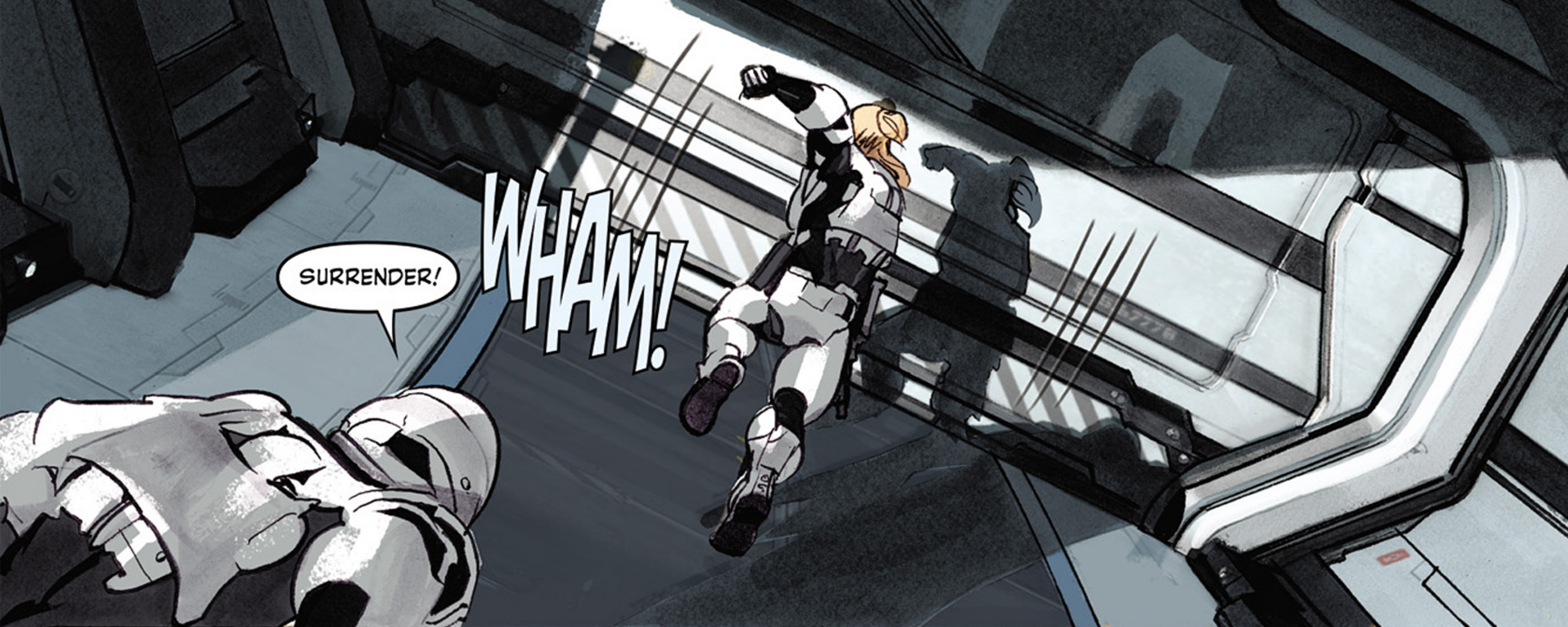
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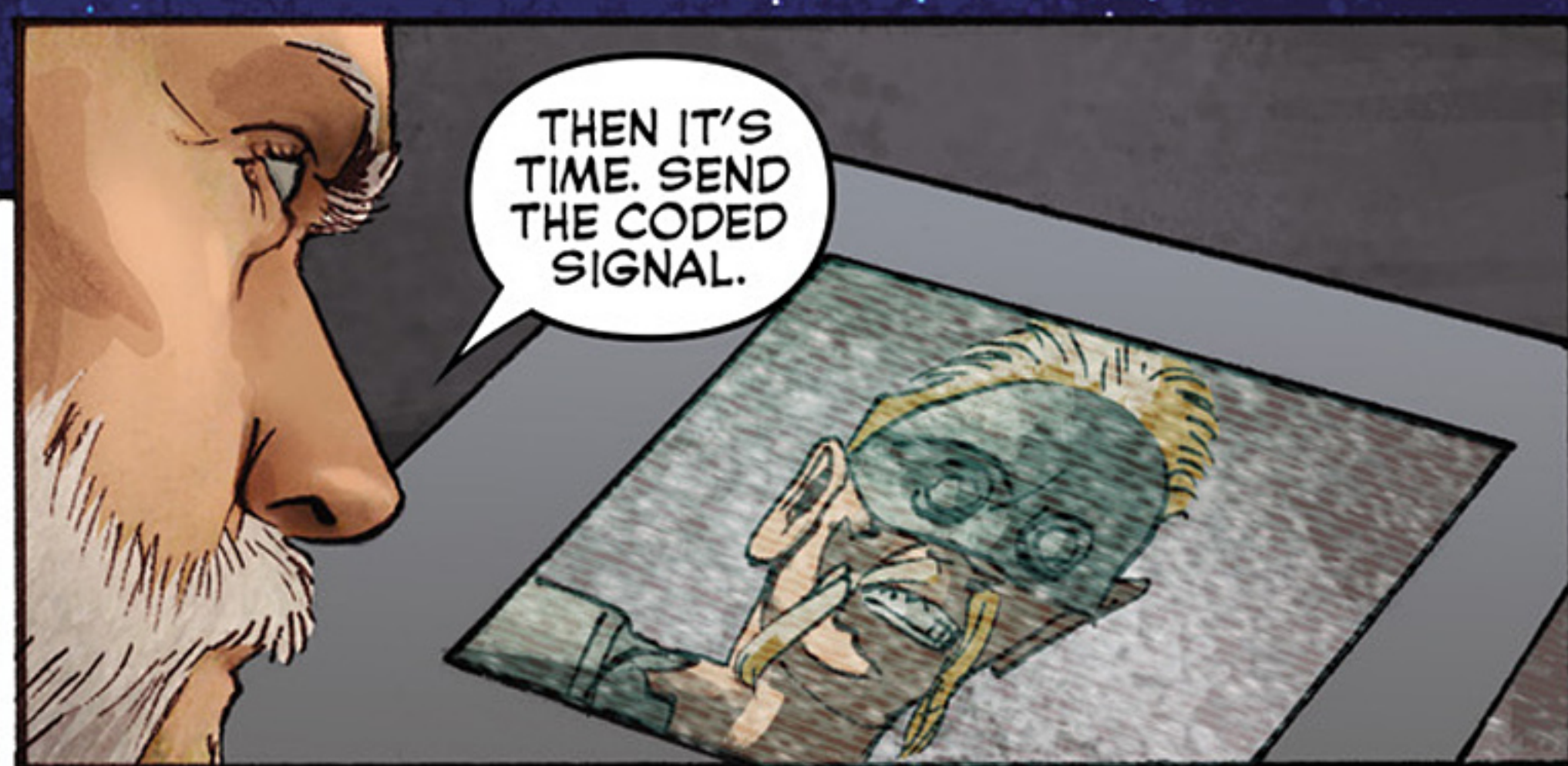
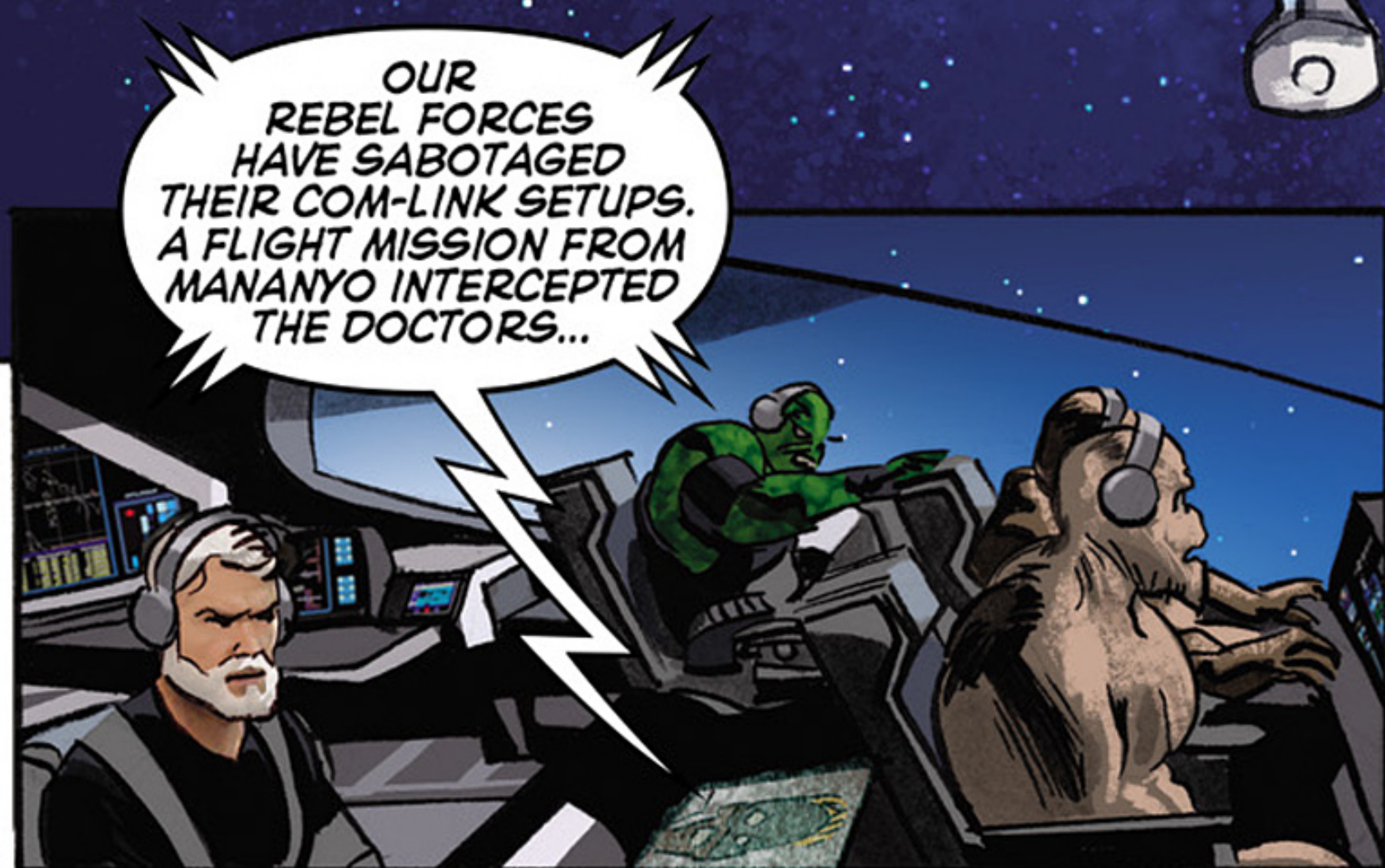
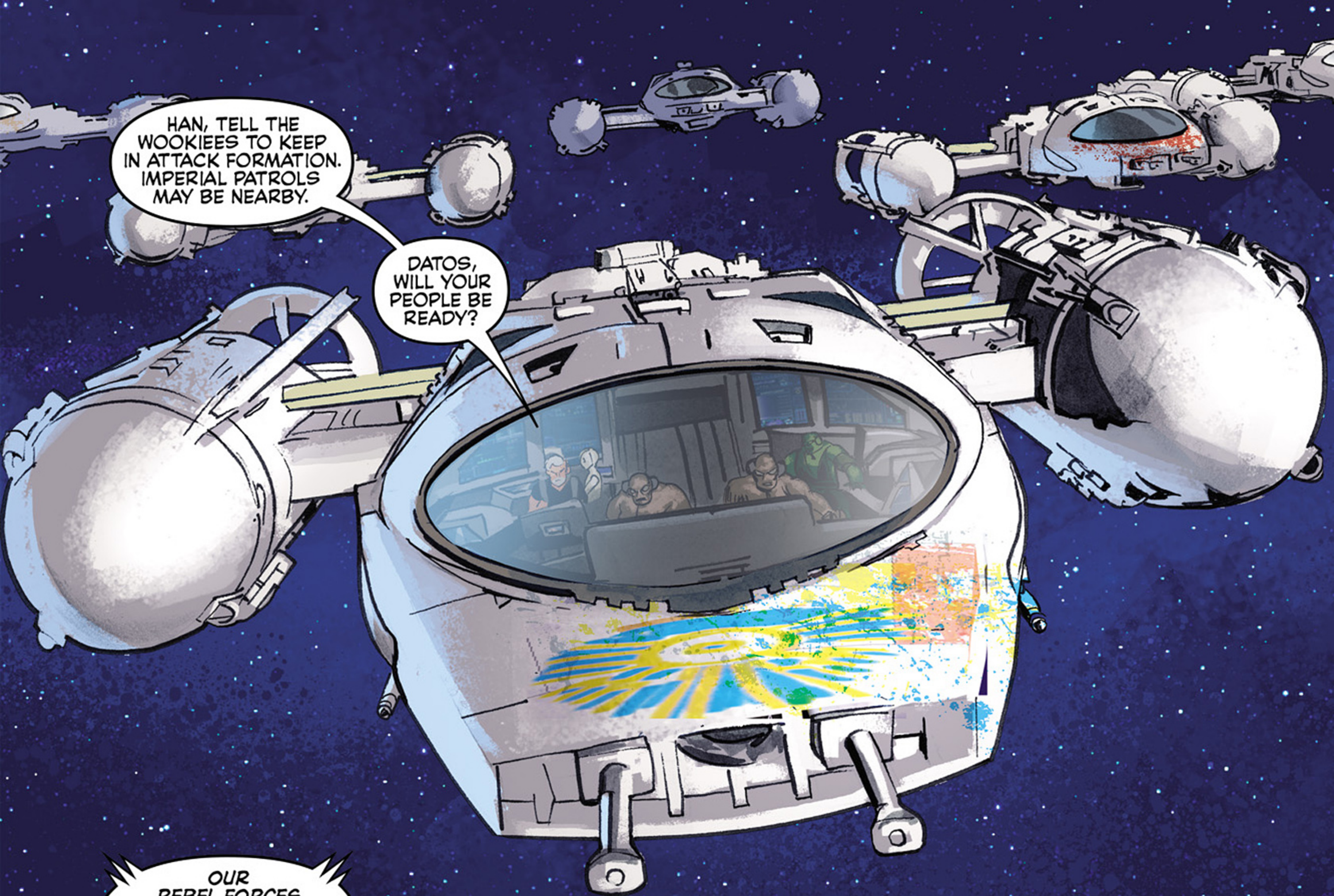
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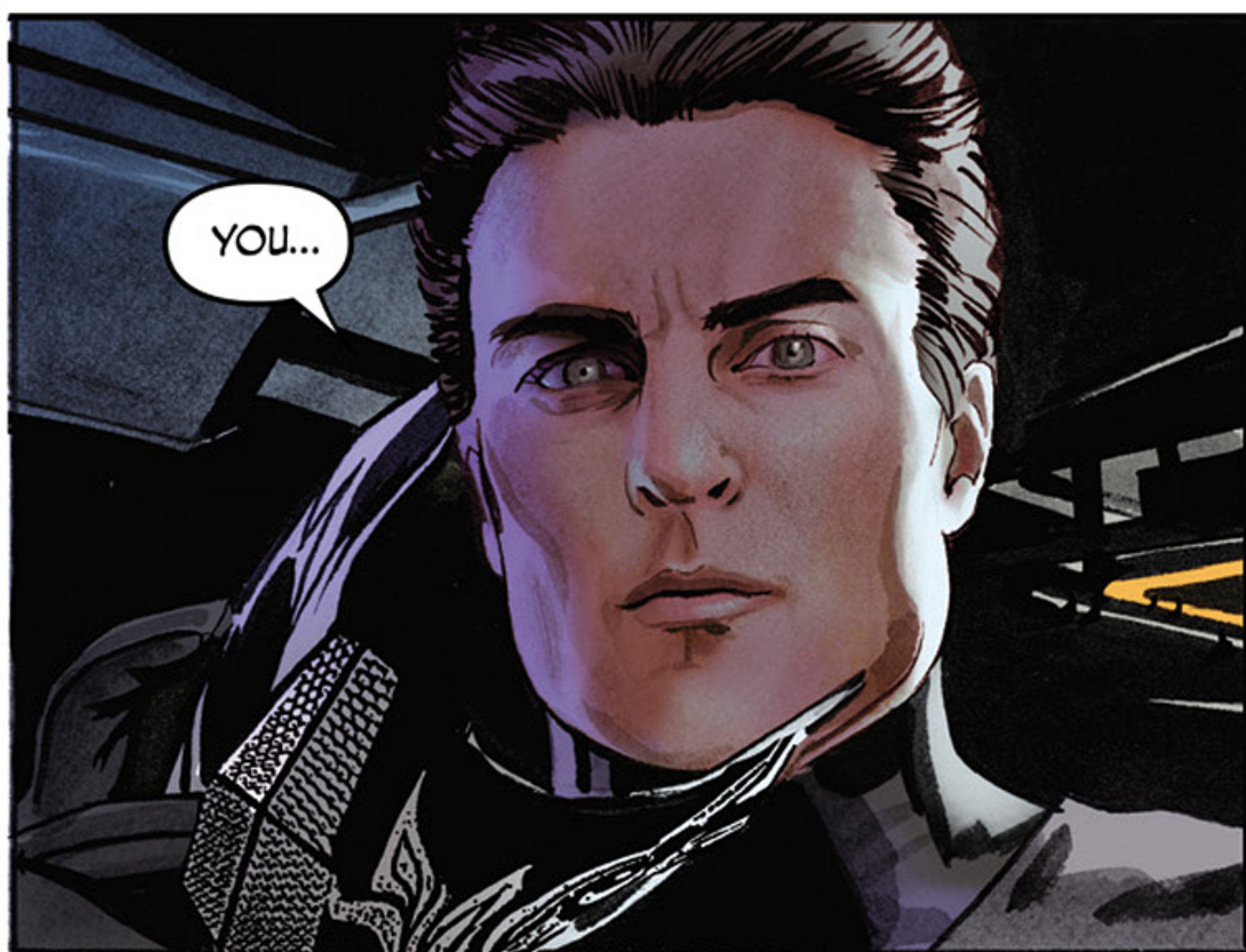














WE'VE
COME TO
INFORM HIM
OF HIS
FATE.



FOR ALL THE
TROUBLE HE'S
CAUSED US, THIS
JEDI DOESN'T SEEM
LIKE MUCH-- DOES
HE, GOVERNOR
HOEDAACK?

YOUR EASY
CAPTURE AND PUBLIC
IMPRISONMENT SHOULD
END THE JEDI *MYTH*
ONCE AND FOR ALL.



PRINCE
VALORUM,
THE SITH MAY
BE NEXT.



TAKE THE
JEDI PRISONER TO
ALDERAAN. I'M SURE
THE EMPEROR WILL ENJOY
HIS *EXECUTION*. MY
ONLY REGRET IS THAT
I WON'T BE THERE
MYSELF.



GENERAL,
THE SPACE
FORTRESS IS ON
THE DARK SIDE
OF AQUILAE.

I SEE
IT...



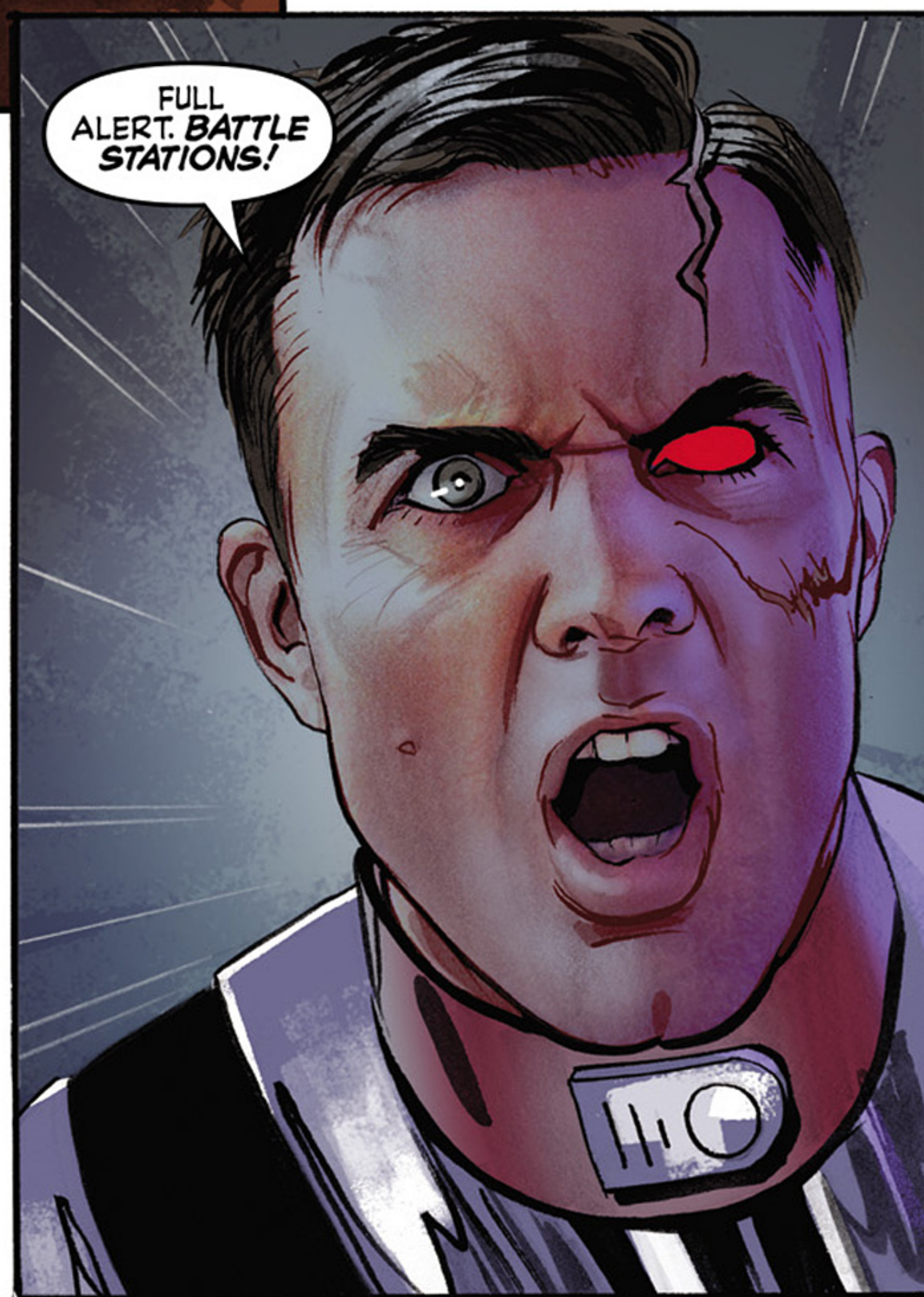
...ACTIVATE
DEFLECTION
SHIELDS.

I CAN
DO THAT, SIR.
I BELIEVE THE
WOOKEES HAVE
THEIR HANDS
FULL.

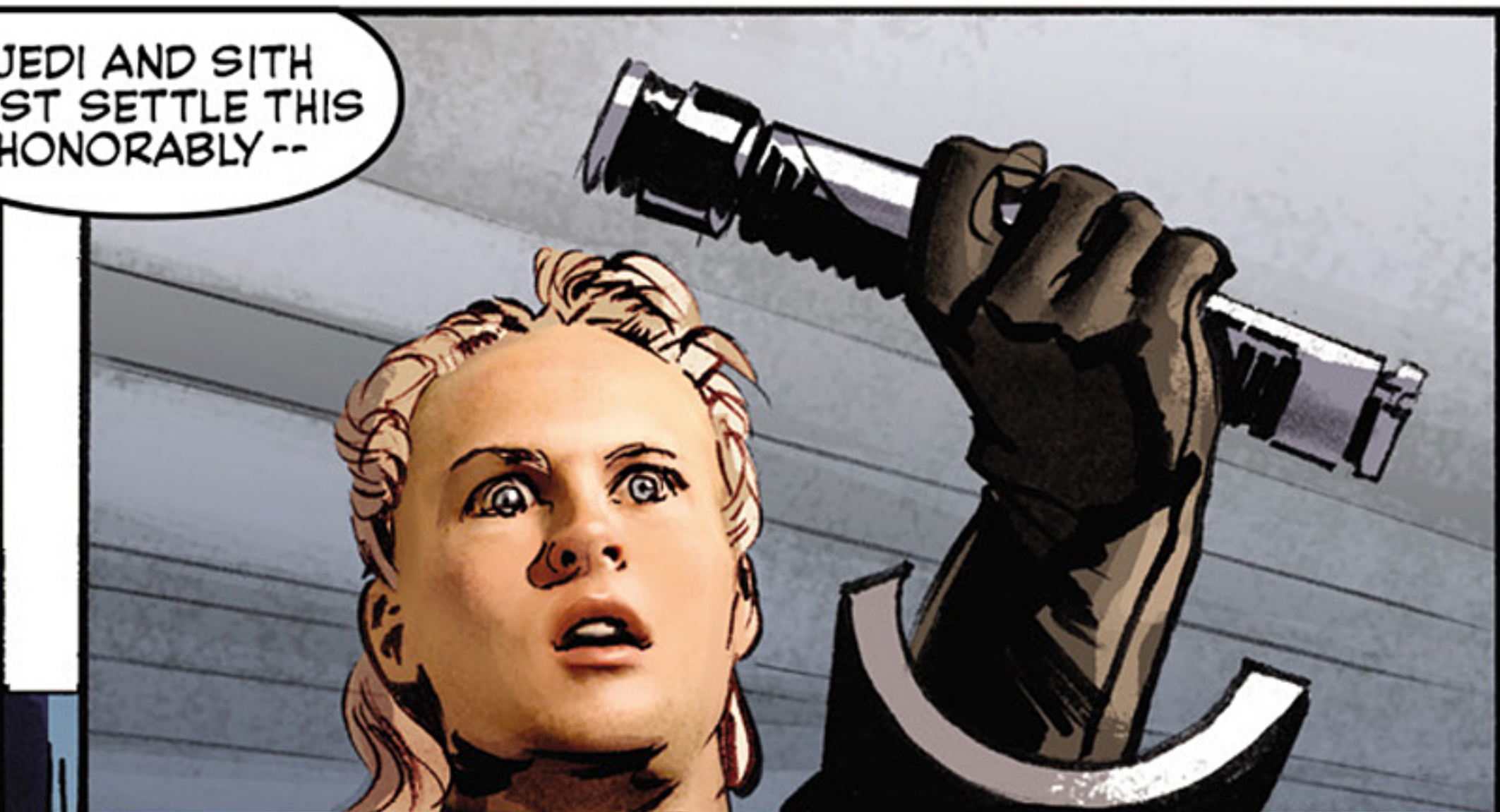
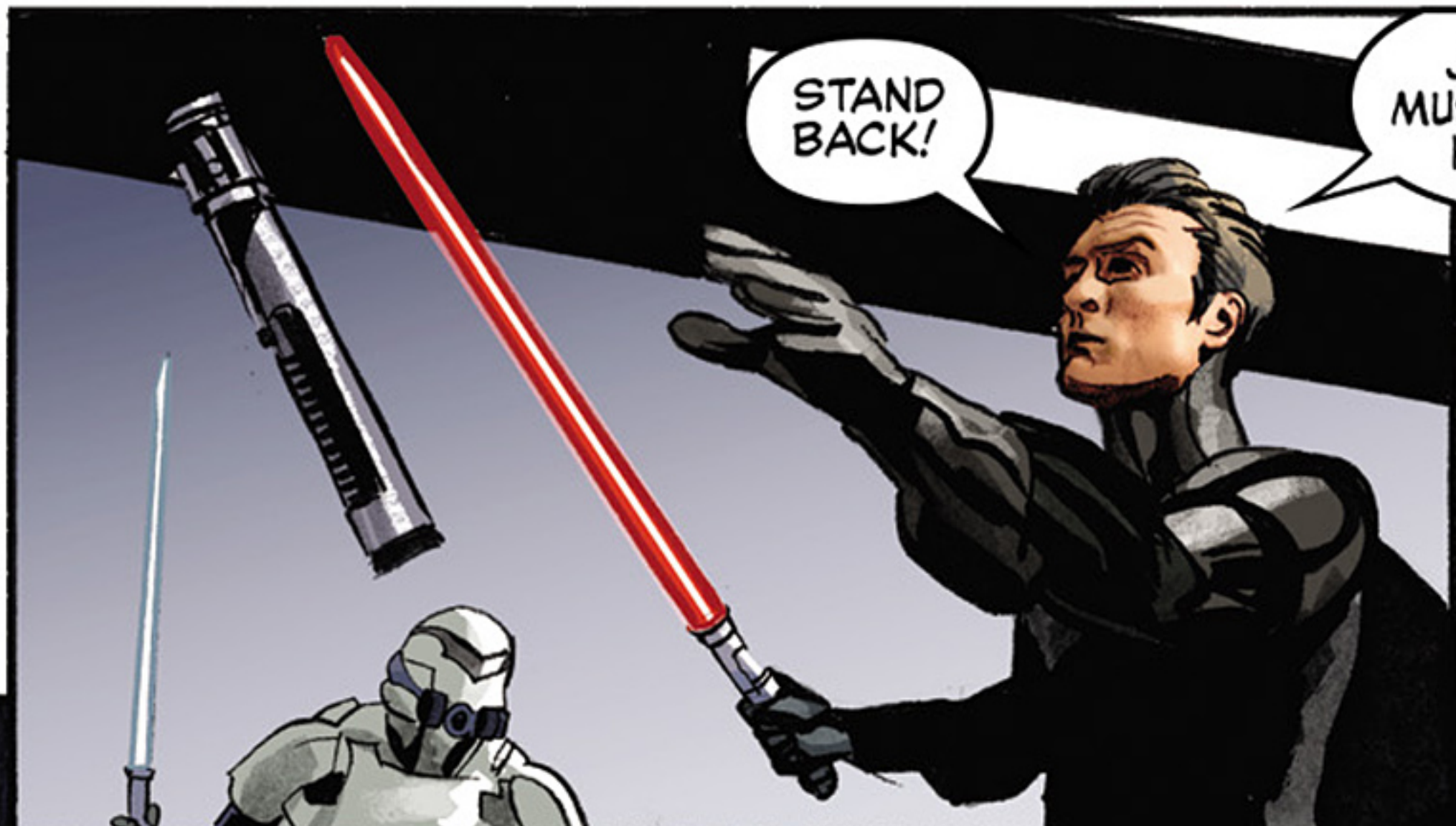


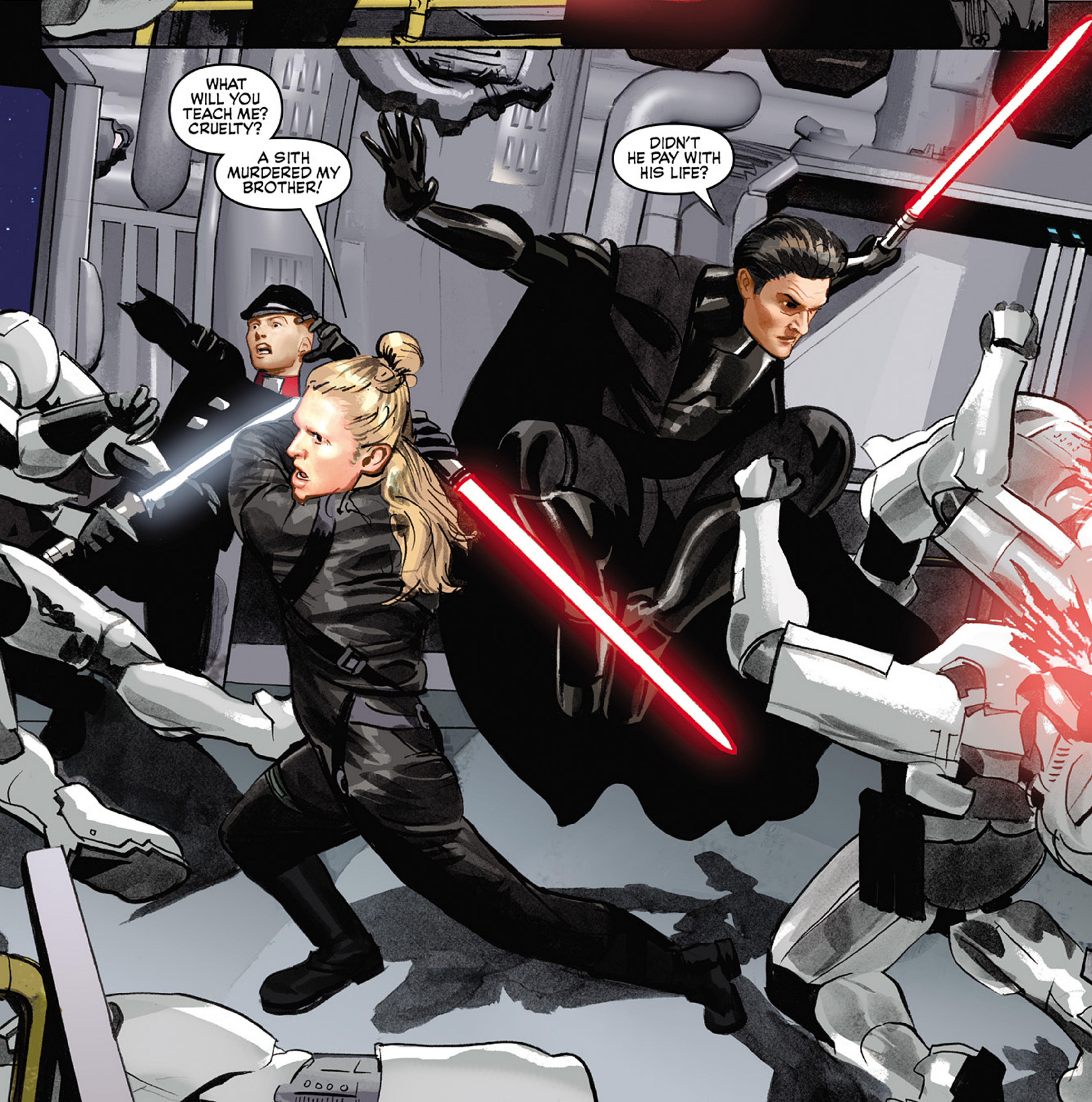
WHAT
IS IT?!

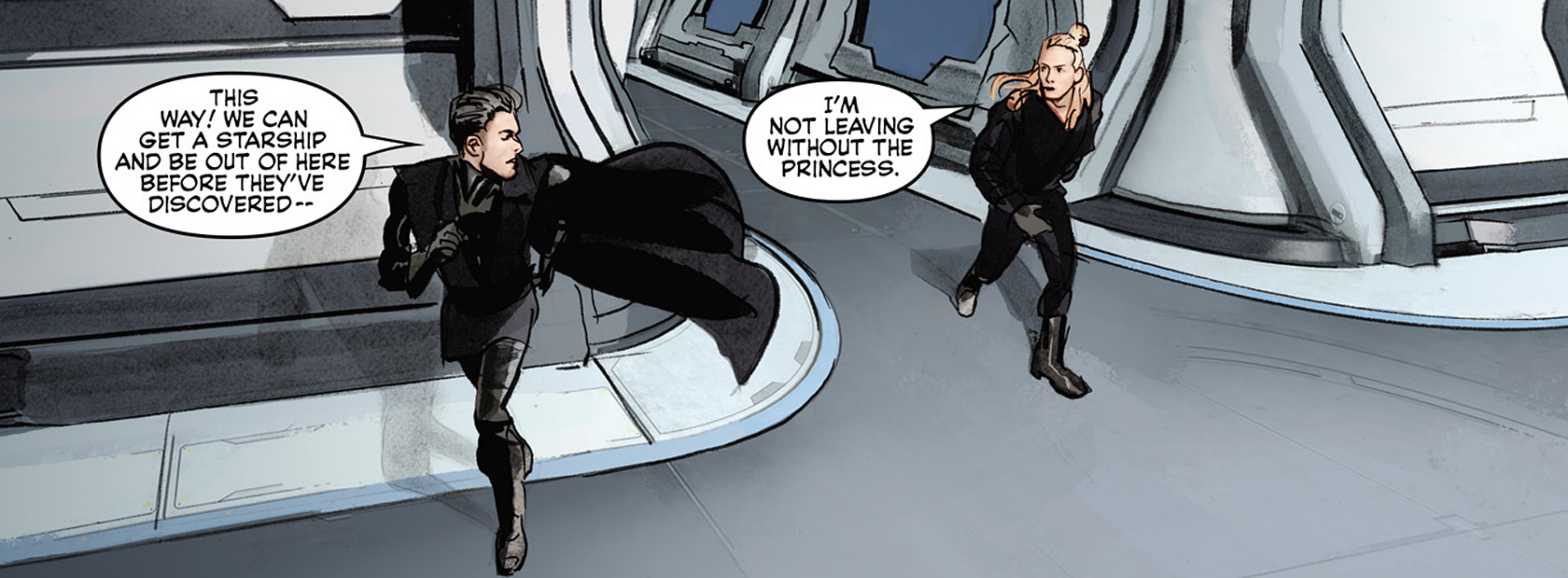
STARSHIPS
APPROACHING,
THREE SQUADS.
IMPERIAL
DESIGN, BUT NO
CLEARANCE.



FULL
ALERT. BATTLE
STATIONS!







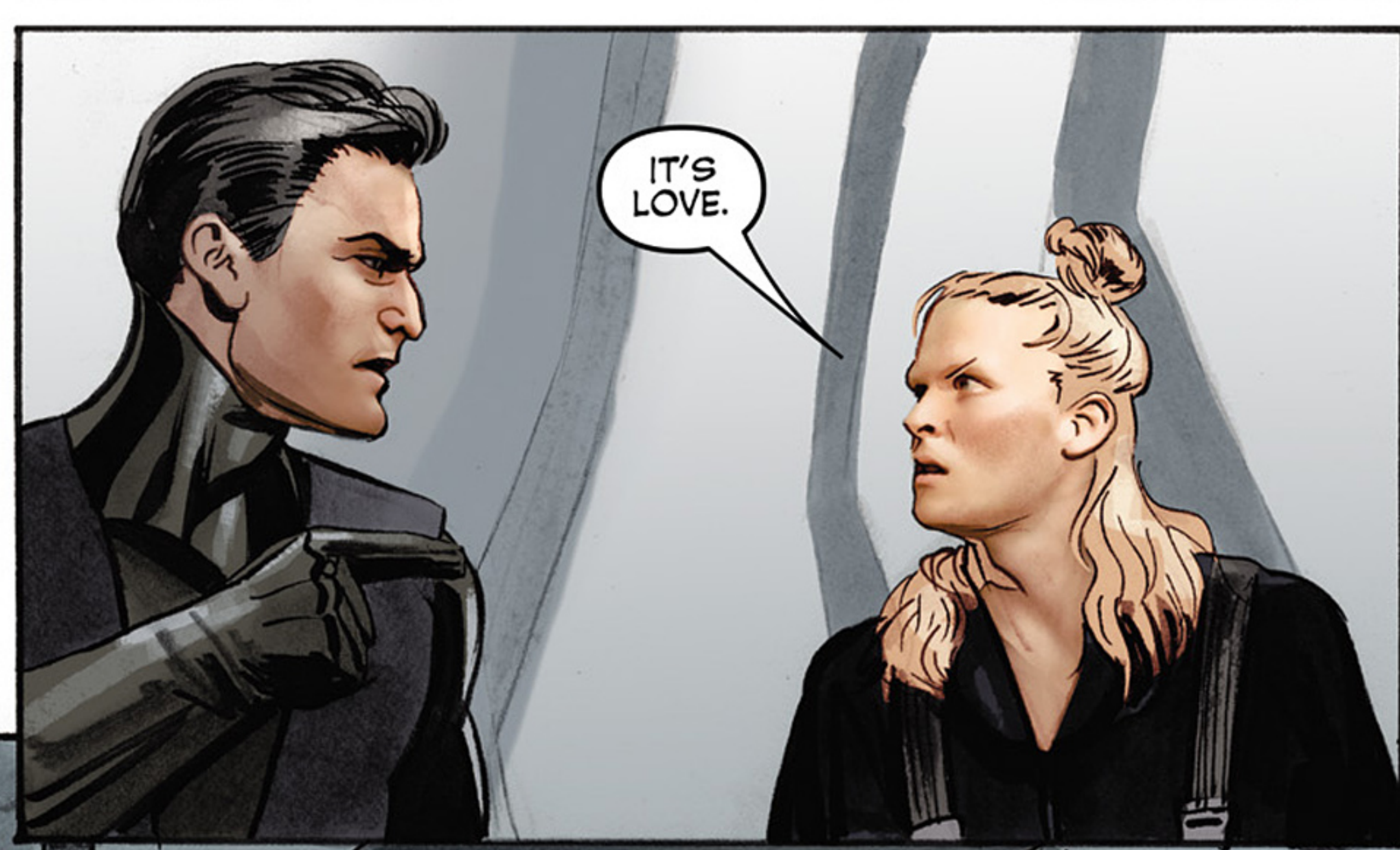
THIS WAY! WE CAN GET A STARSHIP AND BE OUT OF HERE BEFORE THEY'VE DISCOVERED--

I'M NOT LEAVING WITHOUT THE PRINCESS.



IMPOSSIBLE! THERE ARE TRAPS EVERYWHERE...

YOU'RE MAD!



IT'S LOVE.



BY THE WAY, THANKS FOR FREEING ME...



LOVE?! NOW I REMEMBER WHY OUR CLANS HAVE FOUGHT FOR A THOUSAND YEARS!

**BATTLE STATIONS!
ALL PERSONNEL -- BATTLE STATIONS!**



HAN, THESE WOOKIEES HAVE LEARNED THEIR LESSONS WELL! TELL CHEWBACCA TO LEAD HIS SQUADRON TO POINT FIVE-SEVEN ON THE AXIS.

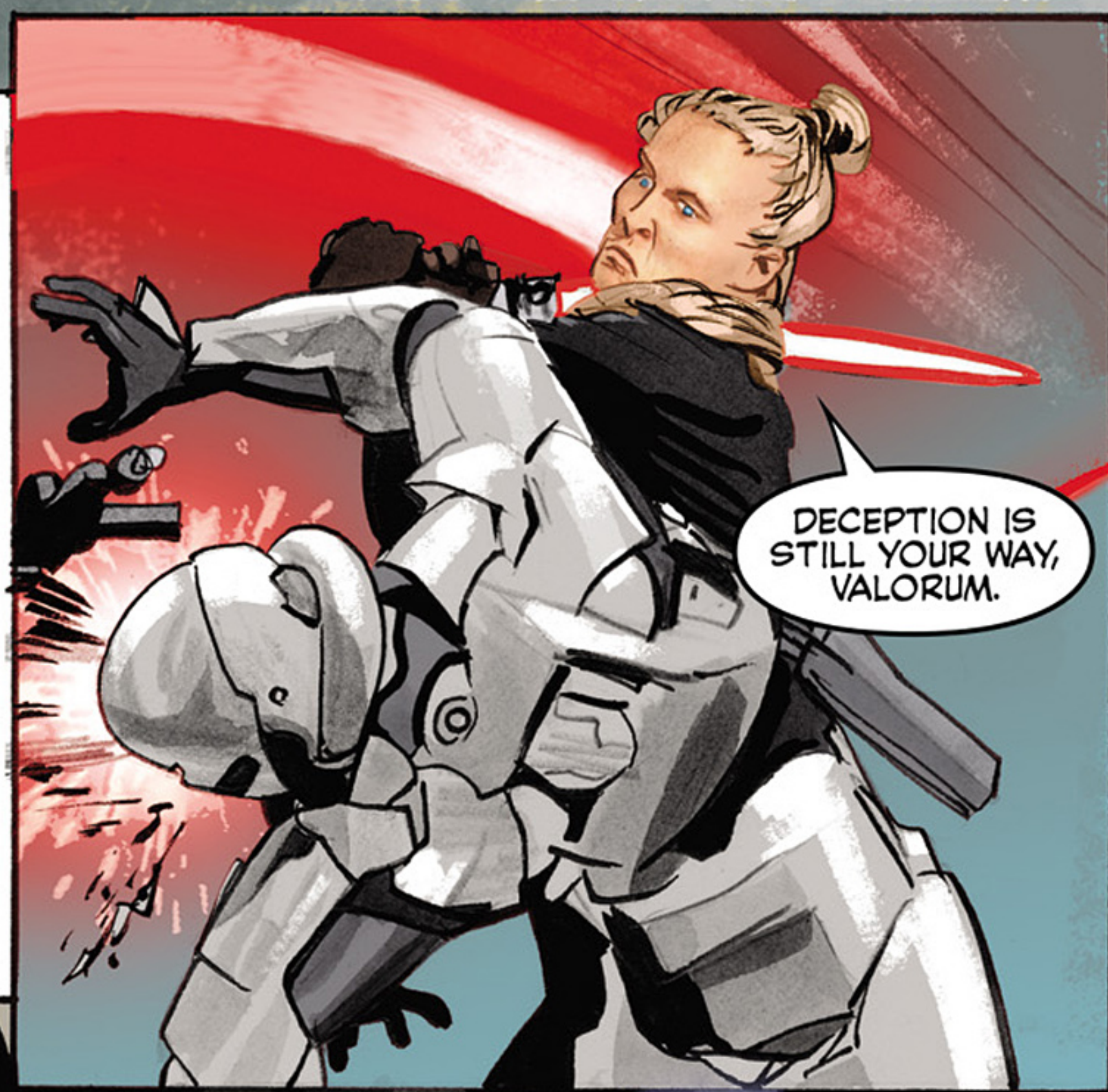
<CHEWIE, TAKE YOUR SQUADRON TO THE TRANSMITTED COORDINATES -- AND GIVE IT ALL YOU'VE GOT!>

<NO PROBLEM, BOSS. THAT HUNK OF LIFELESS METAL IS IN BIG TROUBLE!>

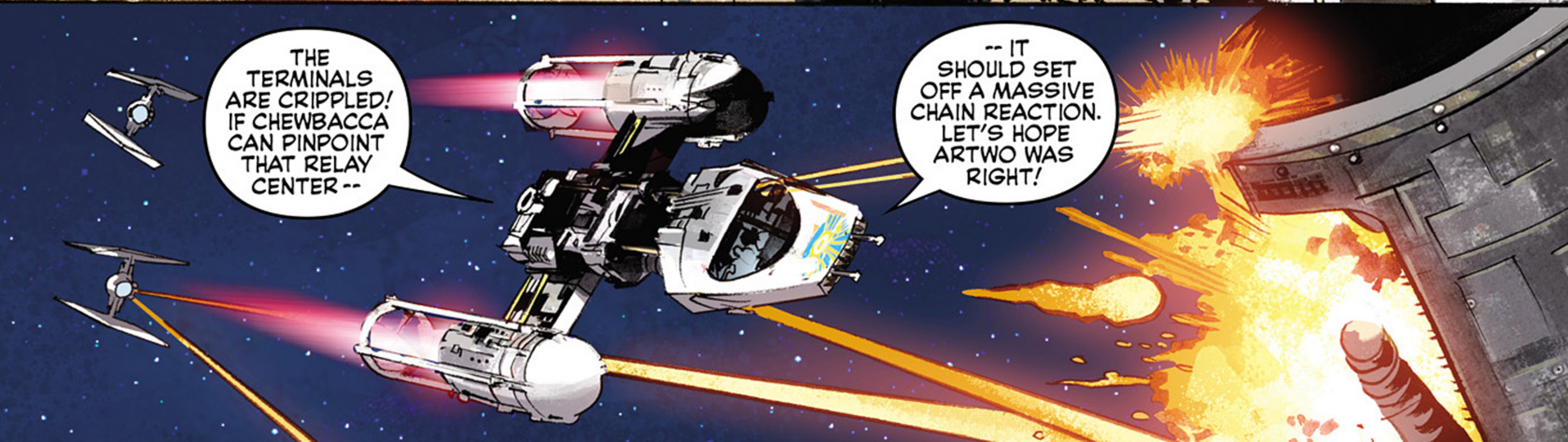
AWAAH UMAHH!

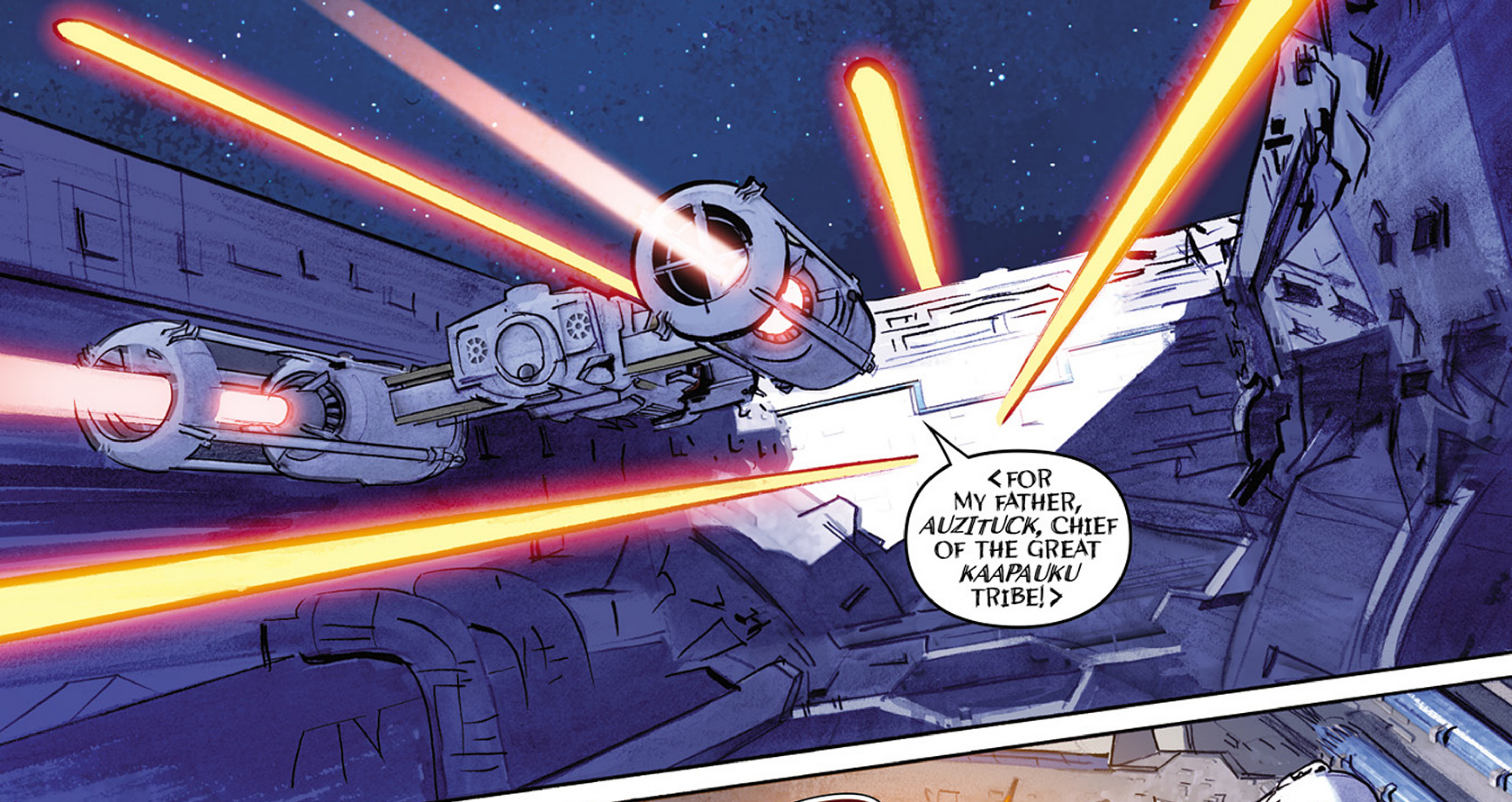
WHAH!

AWAAH!

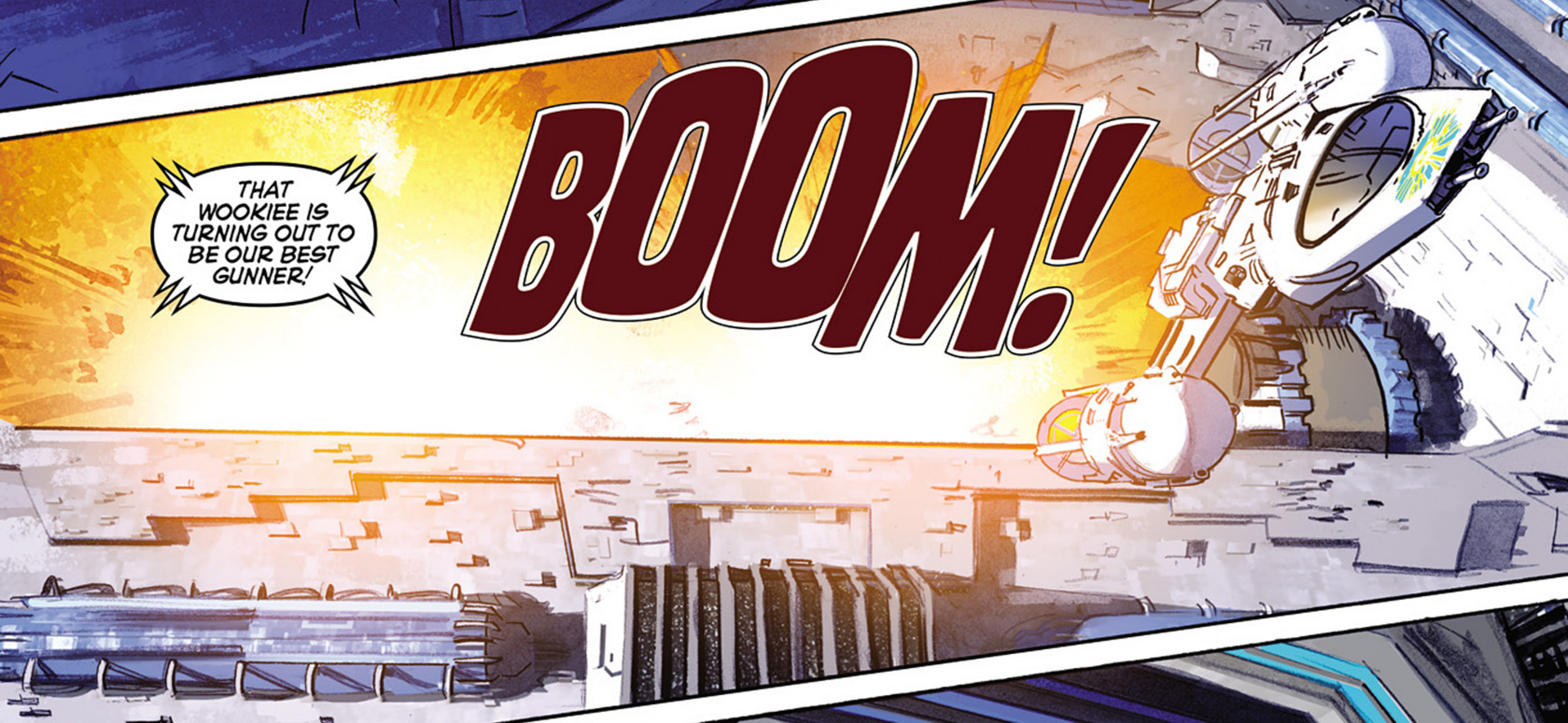




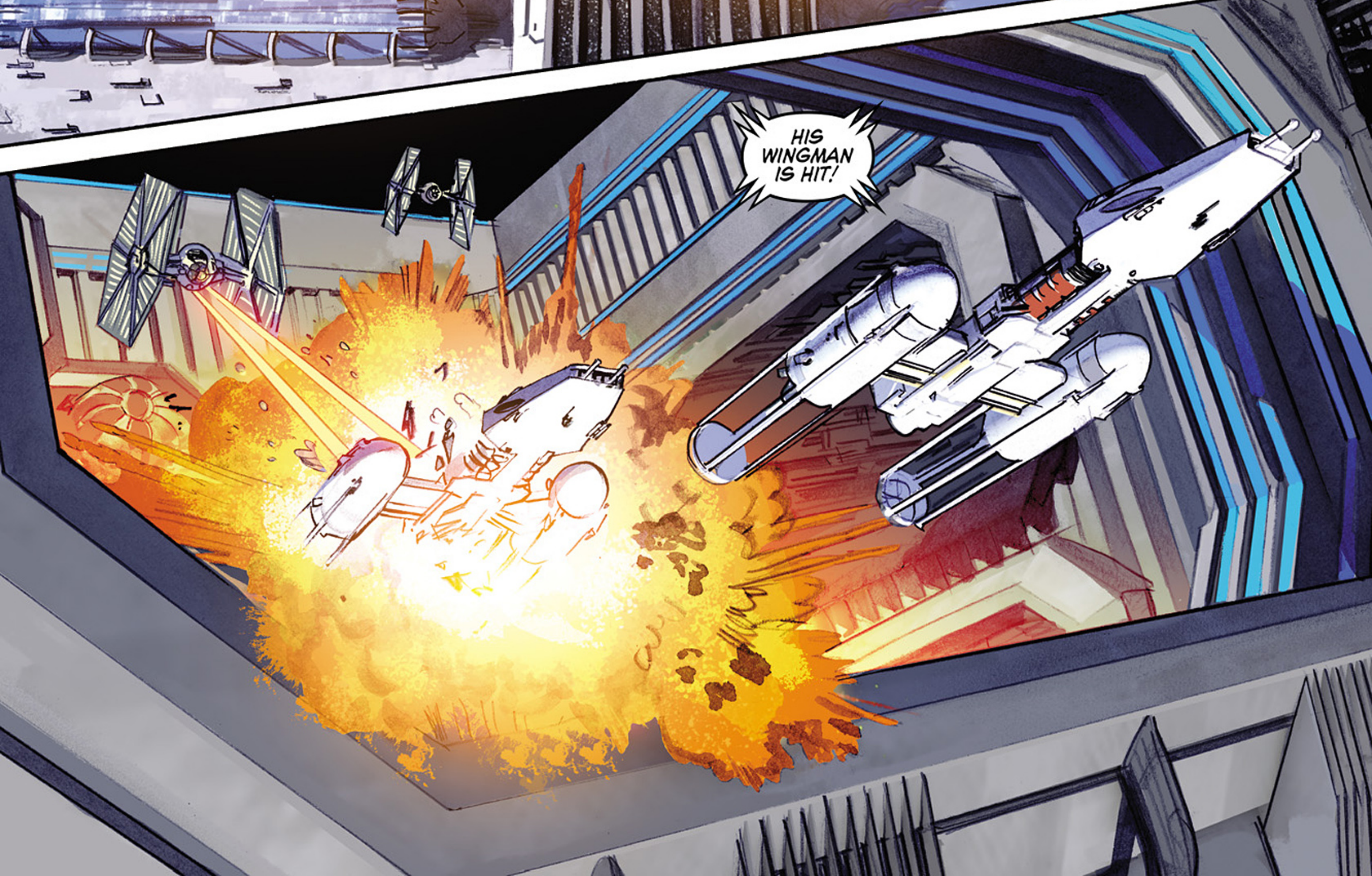




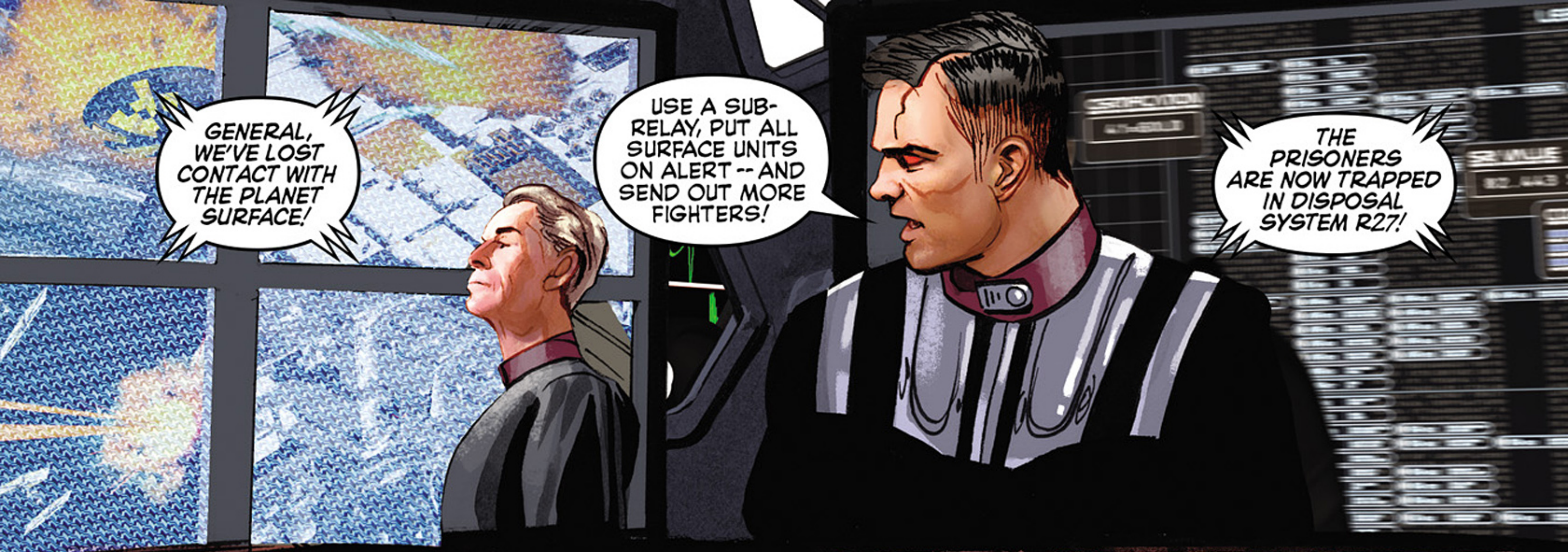
<FOR MY FATHER, AUZITUCK, CHIEF OF THE GREAT KAAPAUKU TRIBE!>



THAT WOOKIEE IS TURNING OUT TO BE OUR BEST GUNNER!



HIS WINGMAN IS HIT!



GENERAL,
WE'VE LOST
CONTACT WITH
THE PLANET
SURFACE!

USE A SUB-
RELAY, PUT ALL
SURFACE UNITS
ON ALERT -- AND
SEND OUT MORE
FIGHTERS!

THE
PRISONERS
ARE NOW TRAPPED
IN DISPOSAL
SYSTEM R27!



THOOM!

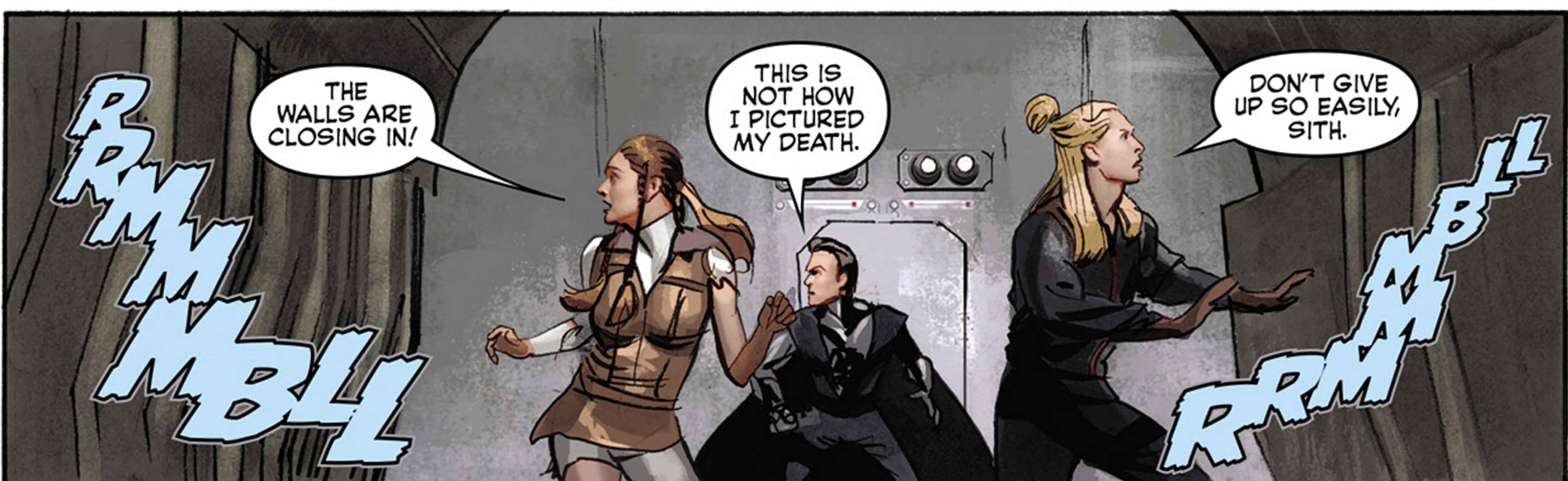


I HAVE
AN IDEA --
THAT WILL SOLVE
AT LEAST **ONE**
PROBLEM.



I HAVE
NO MORE TIME
FOR YOUR PATHETIC
HEROICS. A FUTILE
ATTACK BY YOUR FOOLISH
FRIENDS HAS FORCED
ME TO TAKE SEVERE
ACTION --

-- THE
HOUR OF
YOUR EXECUTION
HAS BEEN
EXPEDITED!



THE
WALLS ARE
CLOSING IN!

THIS IS
NOT HOW
I PICTURED
MY DEATH.

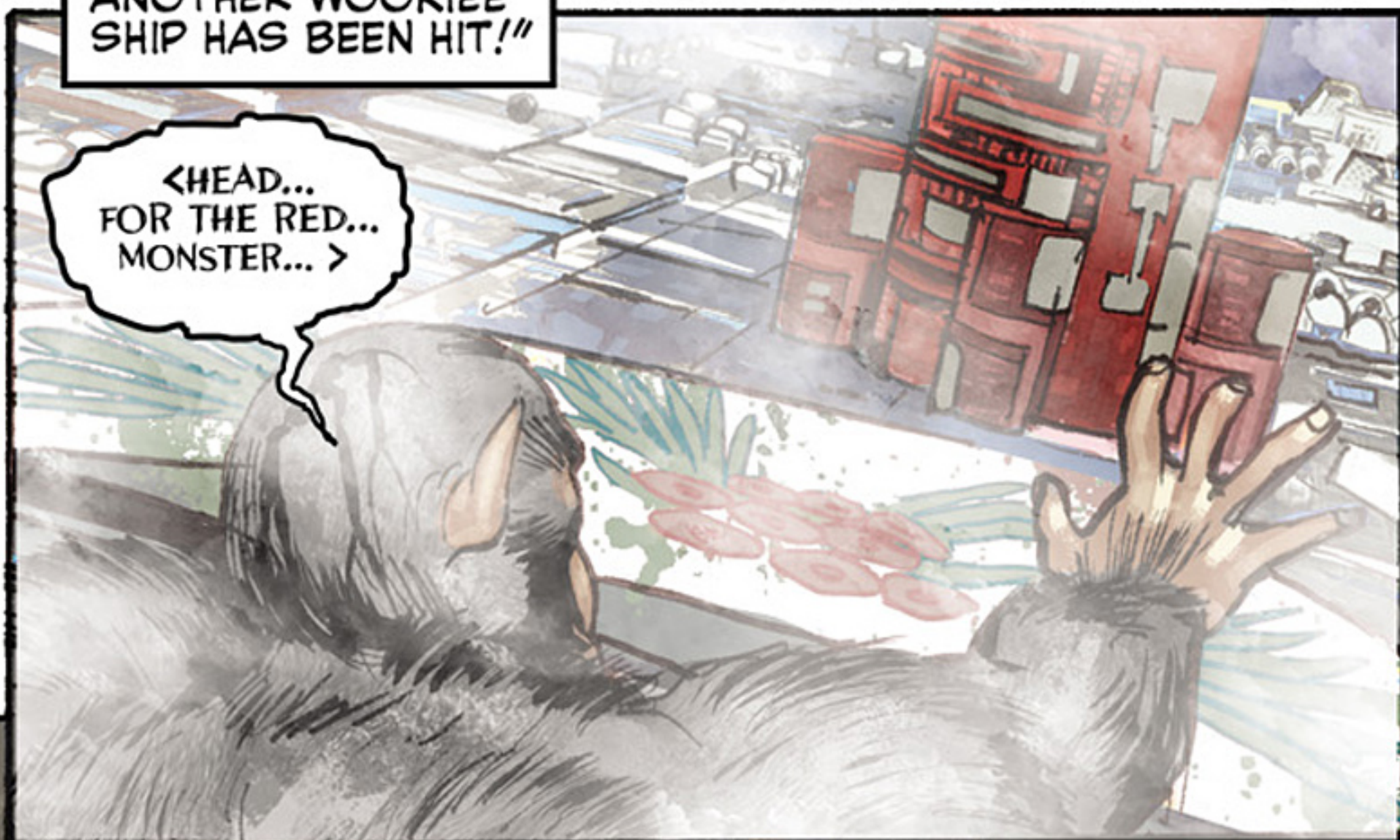
DON'T GIVE
UP SO EASILY,
SITH.

RRMMBLL

RRMMBLL



"SKYWALKER,
ANOTHER WOOKIEE
SHIP HAS BEEN HIT!"



<HEAD...
FOR THE RED...
MONSTER... >



THE
WALLS HAVE
STOPPED! GENERAL
SKYWALKER AND THE
WOOKIEES MUST HAVE
KNOCKED OUT THE
POWER!

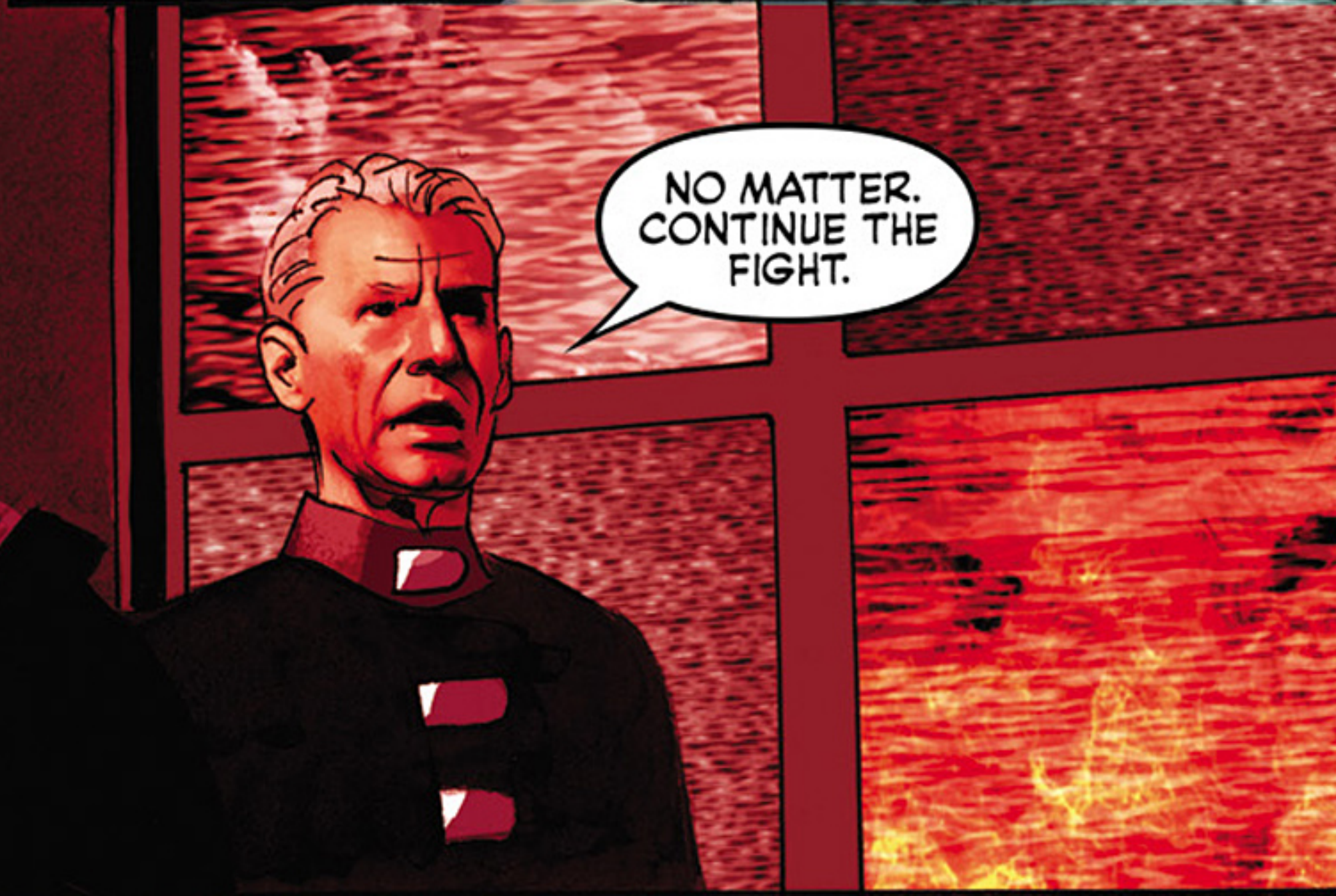
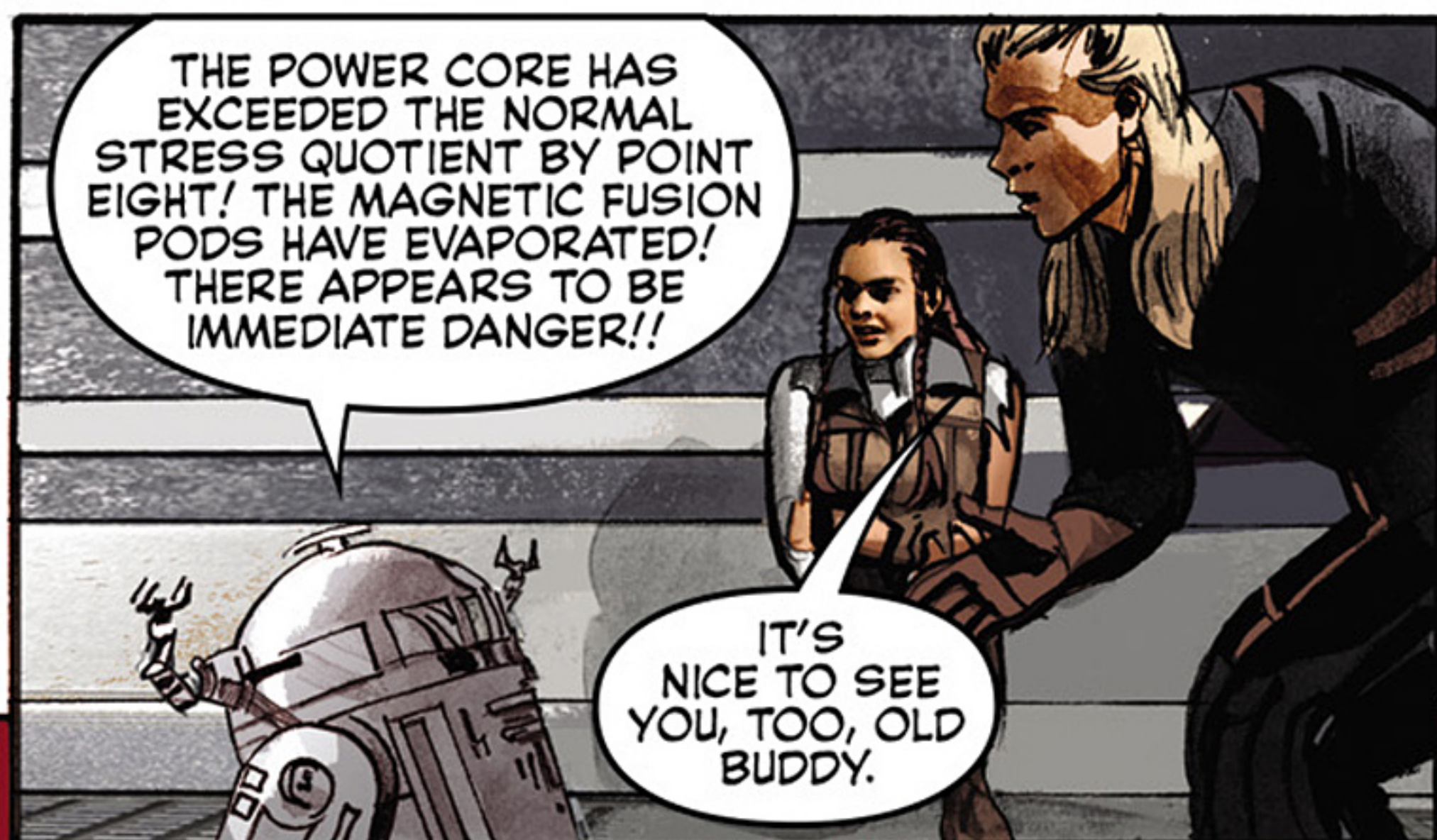
DID YOU SAY
WOOKIEES?



KLANG!



HEY!
OVER
HERE!





HAN, ORDER EVERYONE OUT OF HERE! THE WHOLE THING'S GOING TO BLOW! RETURN TO GORDON!

WHAT ABOUT ANNIKIN AND LEIA?!



AND LITTLE ARTWO?

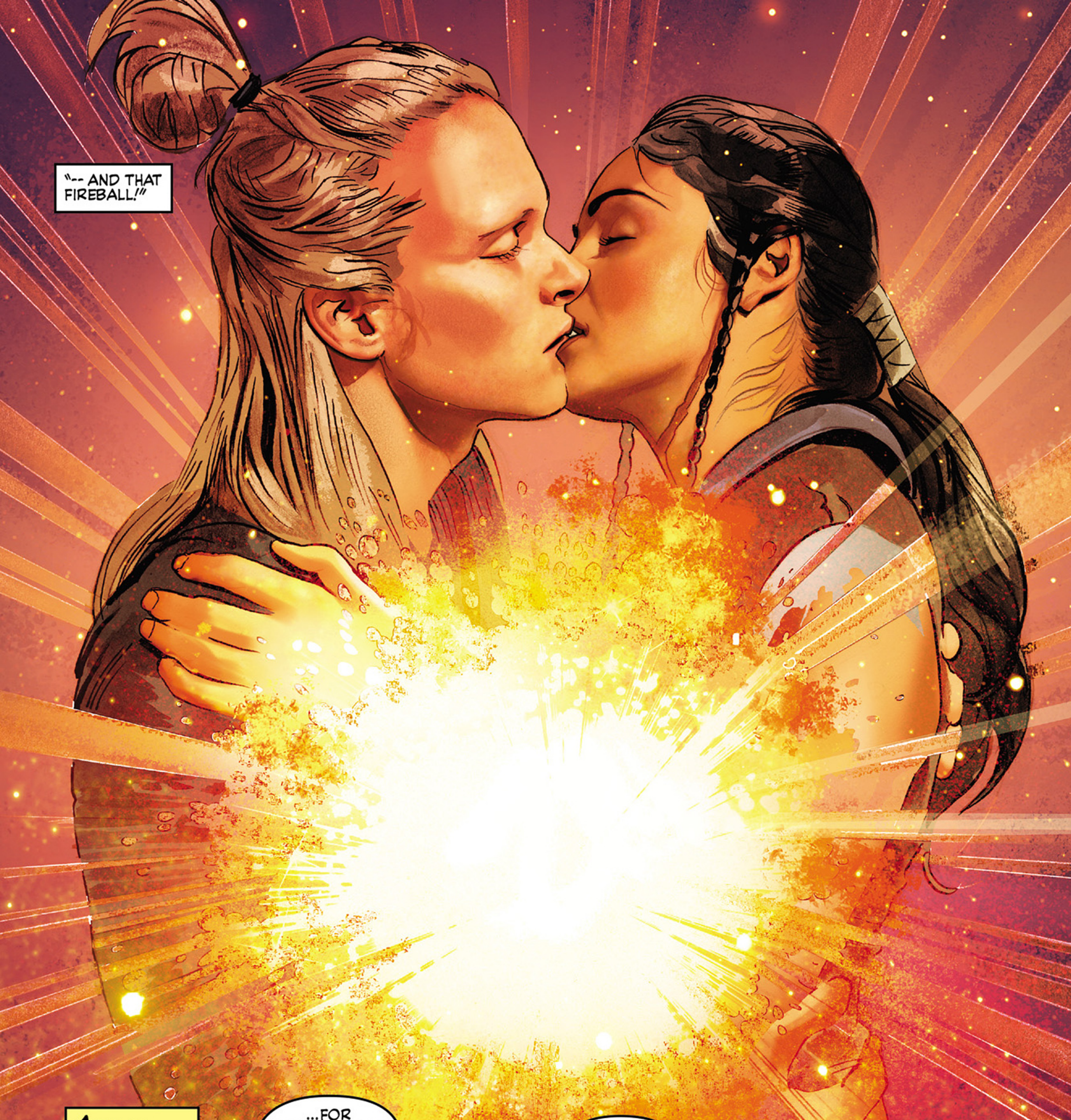
TIME TO STOP WORRYING ABOUT THEM. ANNIKIN IS A *JEDI* NOW.



GET IN-- QUICK!



ACCELERATE! LET'S PUT SOME DISTANCE BETWEEN US --



"-- AND THAT
FIREBALL!"

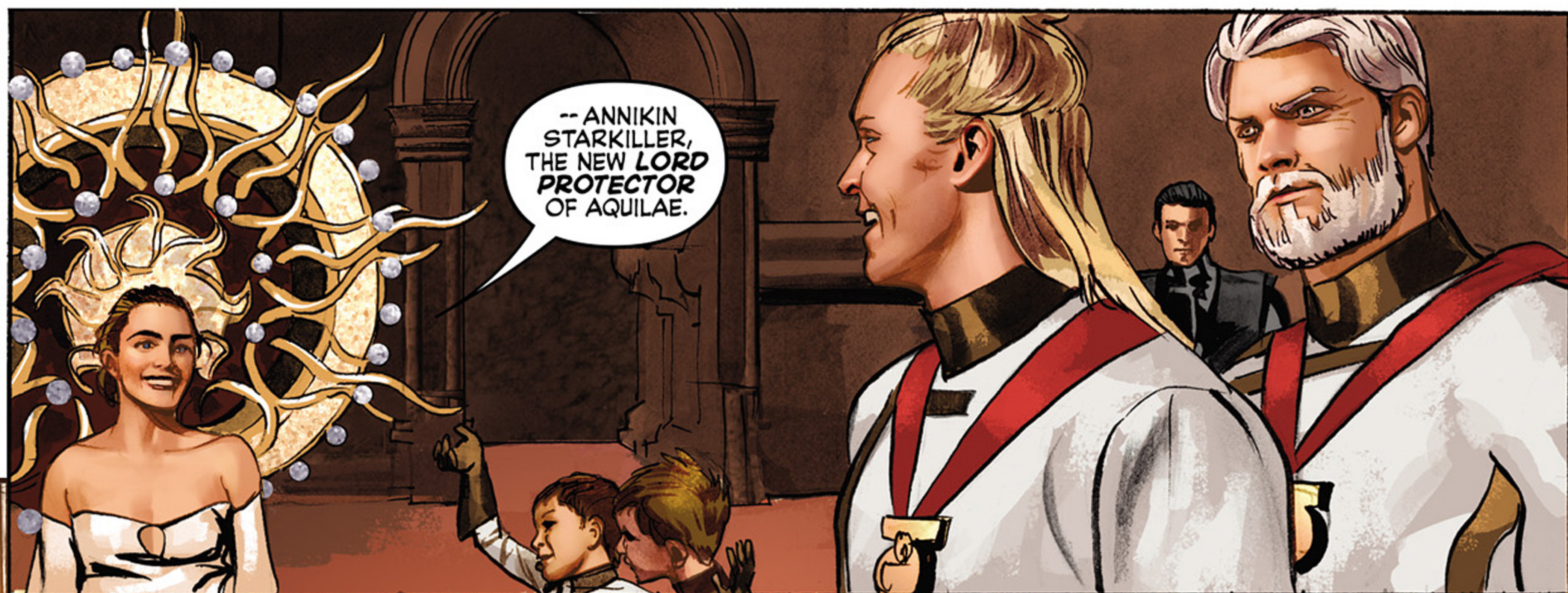
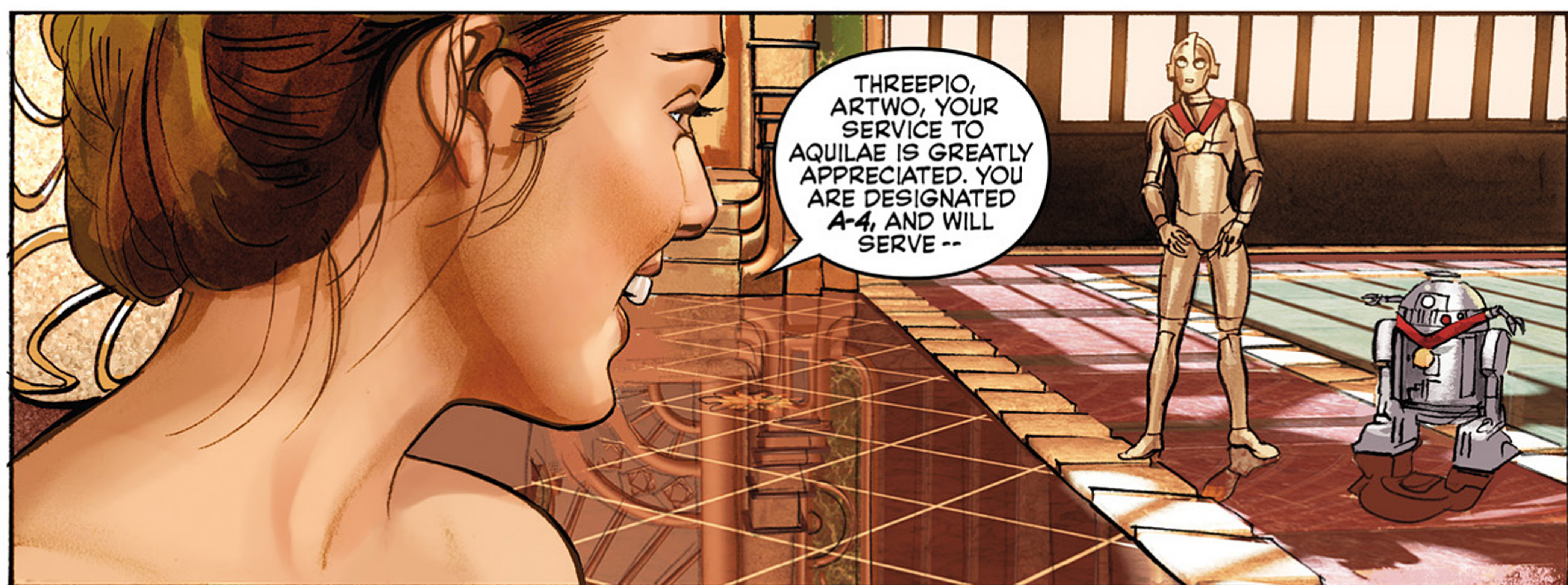
**AQUILAE,
THE SACRED
THRONE ROOM.**

...FOR
YOUR BRAVERY
AND VALIANT
ACTS, DEAR
CHEWBACCA.

HE
SAYS HE'S
HONORED.

CHALLCHEEW.





HOORAY!! LONG LIVE AQUILAE! LONG LIVE FREEDOM!!

As word of the destruction of the Space Fortress spread, a thousand new systems joined Queen Leia and the rebellion, causing a significant crack in the great wall of the Galactic Empire. The acts of Skywalker and Starkiller once again sparked fear in the hearts of the greedy and the malevolent — and a new sense of liberty, not felt for a hundred years, swept through the hearts of all!

But our heroes' greatest adventure was yet to take place — the one which would be known as "SAGA OF THE OPHUCHI"!

THE STAR WARS

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That's it, folks! Nothing left of The Star Wars now except your letters of comment. Well, there are three fine versions of the collected story to come (I hope you find one that brings you joy), but as I write these words, those collections are still in the future. So let's get to your comments:

I've been meaning to write you guys about *The Star Wars* and express my thoughts and feelings about it. So now's as good a time as any . . .

Back in December of 2012, I was thinking about how cool it would be if Dark Horse were to produce a series based on George Lucas's original drafts, seeing how different yet similar all the versions are. I feared that Disney would take *Star Wars* away from you (fears that are now sadly all too true) and really wished for a last "love letter" to George's wonderful galaxy far, far away from Dark Horse. What a surprise it was to me when you actually announced *just this!*

Thank you for making it a reality.

It really has been a great series. It's "stilted and awkward" in just the right amounts, and I love the old school, episodic feel of the plot structure. Some of the nods to the existing films are a bit jarring (the Vader helmet seems a bit weird, but I've grown to love it). And the inclusion of the bounty hunters in issue #6 was certainly not expected! Love the accents! Ha ha!

The overall *Flash Gordon* feel is certainly appreciated. The temptation to much more closely mirror the existing films might have been there at the outset, but I certainly respect and admire the decision to run with what George was referencing.

Mike Mayhew (any relation to Chewie? Kidding!) has really knocked it out of the galaxy, and Rain Beredo's colors are truly gorgeous and complementary! The page where Windy is revived after crashing on the Wookiee world is among my very faves! The look on Windy's face when he comes to is spot on! Thank you, Mike!

All in all, I consider *The Star Wars* to be a success!

Dark Horse has produced many, *many* fantastic comics set in this galaxy, and it will not be the same when 2015 arrives on the horizon like a Star Destroyer looming over our heads (if I can use such an analogy . . .)

The Force has certainly been strong with Dark Horse all these years! And for that, I thank each and every one involved in each and every panel printed!

One last thought before I sign off and climb aboard the life pod: Was there ever any consideration to having Drew Struzan paint a variant cover for *The Star Wars*? That would have been *magic*! (I do so love the Drew feel that Nick Runge's awesome covers have evoked!)

Matt Cook

Well, I'm no dummy, Matt. Drew Struzan was the first person I asked about covers. But Mr. Struzan is retired from commission painting. Fortunately, Gabe Eltaeb, our colorist over on the series Star Wars, suggested his friend Nick. The rest is history!

I'm glad you finally got around to writing before the publication of the final issue!

Just wanted to say I'm really enjoying this series. It's nice to see familiar things but slightly different from what we would eventually see on the big screen. Sad to see Whitsun go, but then again, few do survive in this original draft. Loved the Wookiees and the bounty hunters, of course. The only thing I have a problem with is the Annikin and Leia romance. For some reason it doesn't ring true. Maybe it would have worked on the big screen, but somehow it feels a little forced in the comic pages. Can't wait for issues #7 and #8 to see how it all ends. Thank you, Dark Horse, for making this series happen.

Jose Steenwijk
The Netherlands

It's important to keep in mind that the script we're adapting is a rough draft, Jose. It's usual for screenplays to go through a number of drafts and "polishes" before filming begins. This screenplay, however, went through several massive rewrites before it became the version you saw as Star Wars: A New Hope. This is the earliest full version, and we wanted to adapt it, not create a new version.

Every page I read plays in my mind like a movie scene. This is a must-have series for *Star Wars* fans. I appreciate the phenomenal creative story and art design from everyone at Dark Horse. Great job!

Victor Sandez
Colton, California

Thank you, Victor! We all appreciate your compliments, none more than Mike Mayhew, who made a Herculean effort to get this series completed on time. At one point we discussed bringing on another artist to assist him, but Mike just rolled up his sleeves and got the job done on his own. If you should run into Mike at a comics convention in the future, give him a well-deserved pat on the back!

I am a huge *Star Wars* fan; however, I am just getting into comics. When I saw issue #1 of *The Star Wars*, I knew I had to buy it as my first comic for my collection. Since then I have read everything up to issue #6, and I have to say I sincerely love the story as well as the amazing drawings. It is amazing to see how different this is from what was shown in theaters, but at the same time some of the elements and scenes are familiar to anyone who has seen the movies.

As for this being the end of Dark Horse producing *Star Wars* comics, I guess that's the way business is, but it will not be the end of Dark Horse for me. I look forward to following the careers of Mike Mayhew and J. W. Rinzler very closely to see what other work they will produce in the future.

Thanks for the great reads, and may the Force be with you.

Spencer Scherer

Welcome to comics, Spencer! You will find lots to love besides Star Wars (though we have published many thousands of pages set in the galaxy far, far away). I hope you enjoy your first steps into a wider world.

The Star Wars has been an amazing joy ride back to my youth, when I first fell in love with the franchise. Reading these comics has been like reliving the adventures all over again in a different realm. Any fan who has not picked up this series is cheating themselves out of an incredible experience of what is the missing piece of the *Star Wars* universe. Thank you,

Dark Horse, for bringing us one of the best comics to come out in years! I only hope that others will enjoy these stories for years to come—I know I will.

D. Fischer II
Pequea, Pennsylvania

Aw, D, you're gonna make us blush. Many years from now, when you (and other fans) are coming back to reread these issues, smile and raise a glass in our memory. Either that, or pick up the latest comic we've published!

I might be late in writing this, but I wanted to say that I have been really enjoying *The Star Wars*. Ever since I saw the first movie in the theater back in 1977, I've been a fan of the film and of many of the associated spinoffs and tie-ins. But I never thought I'd get to enjoy the *original* version of the story.

The story and art from Rinzler, Mayhew, and Beredo has been exciting and eye opening, with some beautiful covers as well. I love that Dark Horse has given me a chance to see my favorite movie with different eyes—reinterpreted, in a sense, by taking it back to its original iteration.

I know Dark Horse doesn't have any control over this but, after reading every issue (so far) of the comics, I would love to see *The Star Wars* done as a one-time, noncanon film all on its own. It's crazy to think that, but then again, back when I was in the fifth grade, I never suspected I'd be able to read an adaptation of the first *Star Wars* story—let alone a version done so incredibly well!

Your book has given me—wait for it—a new hope.

Mike McGee

Thank you, Mike! While we're sad to see the license go, if this is to be our Star Wars swan song, we couldn't be prouder. Stay strong, everyone. And may the Force be with you.

Randy Stradley
editor

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